

# 2012

## Annual School Performance Report



**Mountain District**  
Christian School





# Mountain District Christian School



## **MDCS VISION STATEMENT**

It is the vision of the MDCS Association to provide by God's grace, a flourishing Prep to Year 12 school community where Christ centred education is paramount.

## **MDCS MISSION STATEMENT**

The MDCS Association serves the families and the Christian Community of our district who desire a Christ centred education.

We do this by providing quality biblically-directed teaching and learning in a nurturing environment.

Such education seeks to develop the God given gifts of each child and, together with parents and the church, equip the child for a life of service in God's world.

## Introduction

Mountain District Christian School is a P-12 non-denominational independent school located in the picturesque Dandenong Ranges east of Melbourne. Established by Christian parents over thirty years ago, Mountain District Christian School has at its heart a desire to partner with parents in educating young people in values consistent with its biblical foundations. Mountain District Christian School is a welcoming school that seeks to nurture students in a supportive learning environment. Set on seventeen acres of bushland, Mountain District Christian School is blessed with attractive learning and play spaces.

## Principal's Message

2012 has been a remarkable year at MDCS. We continue to be blessed as we look to educate from a biblical perspective on our beautiful site here in the Dandenong Ranges. During this year we explored an amazing array of God's creation from our participation in Melbourne Zoo's Lord Howe Island Stick Insect breeding program to a whole Primary school production. As usual we celebrated significant milestones with a little dressing up! A highlight for me, apart from our Toy Story themed Year 12 last day, was to see new MDCS teacher Mr Heckathorn as Wally (Where's Wally) as part of the Book Week activities.

Students are gifted in a vast variety of ways. I love to see creativity and thoughtfulness. In 2012 I saw something that I found extraordinary. It was at our "Pi" day. One of the events was the recalling of "Pi" to as many decimal places as can be remembered. The winner, by some margin, was Declan in Year 8 who recited Pi to approximately two hundred and thirty decimal places. Yes, two hundred and thirty decimal places.

This year, in particular, was marked by three fabulous productions. As part of our new VCE subject Theatre Studies we had a mainly female cast perform Oscar Wilde's very amusing play



*The Importance of Being Earnest*. A feature of the Primary school year was the whole Primary play written by our own Mrs Godman, *Charlie's Unique Problem*. It was simply magnificent! As per usual the Year 9 students had a production to organise as a whole class. This year they went back in time to the 1960's performing a Mr Beer production, 'Before a Fall'.

Finally, MDCS is a growing school. We have been privileged to have a full Secondary school for a few years. In 2012 our Primary school continued its steady growth and we opened up an extra class to assist that growth. One of the challenges that is emerging with this growth is that we are fast running out of classroom spaces. Thankfully, we were successful in being awarded a small grant to assist us in expanding our Art Room facility to cope with the use. May the Lord continue to bless this school.

Shalom

**CHRISTOPHER PRIOR**





## ***From the Board President***

2012 has been a year that has again seen Mountain District Christian School's continual development into a stable and wonderful school we can thank God for. It has been challenging but very satisfying to have been a part of the last year of the school's development. We have a strong and stable school leadership team whom we are very blessed to have. We are financially sound with record student numbers that are providing a whole new set of challenges for the future growth of the school.

Mountain District Christian School's growth in student numbers is against the local trend with most schools in the area losing students. Couple this with the news of at least 3 independent schools closing over the past 12 months in Victoria, we can see God at work in our community.

The Board has continued to review policy around the school's operation throughout the year and to our great relief we have made it through it all..... twice. This is the first time that we have thoroughly reviewed policy since the

Board moved away from a Management Board in 2004 to the current Governance model that is in place now.

Governance is a very important part of our school's process and has allowed the school, particularly under Chris Prior's stewardship, to develop sustainably across all areas of school life.

Understanding the way that governance works is very challenging for all of us. As association members and parents in the school, we need to develop an understanding of what governance means, and how we behave and our responsibilities under this model.

Equally as important, for us as an Association, is understanding what Christ Centred Education is all about and how we as parents can and do make a huge difference in the education of our children. Christian Education National runs a short course, Certificate of Christian Education, that Board members have undertaken to complete and I encourage all Association members to attend. I attended it last year and found it very good.



## ***From the Board President (cont.)***

This year we have developed board guidelines in regard to board membership and length of service on the board. This has been restricted to 3 consecutive terms (9 years) and serving as chair has been restricted to 3 consecutive years. That means that I have now served my term as chair of the school board. I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of this position and am very confident that we have the personnel on the Board to continue to supply the leadership that is required under the governance model we follow.



I would like to express my thanks to the Board this year. It has been challenging and each member has worked thoughtfully and diligently through a number of issues. As a group we have achieved a significant amount, each bringing different gifts to the role. I would particularly like to thank Fiona Bridges who is stepping off the Board at this time. Her contribution to the Board has been significant particularly in the area of Association Membership; she will be missed.

All the other Board members are continuing on the Board which will allow for a good deal of continuity next year, where we are looking at Board Goals and Policy Structure as well as reviewing infrastructure and developing a new master plan for the site.

I would be remiss not to mention our wonderful

staff who, over the past year have worked very hard to achieve wonderful results in all areas of the school including teaching, academics, pastoral care for our students and each other, administration, management and maintenance, providing a holistic education process of encouragement and accountability. I am constantly delighted with how wonderful all our students are, in response to the thoughtful and collaborative process our staff develop and work to provide.

Over the next 12 months the political implications around government and independent schools, the Gonski Report and funding are going to be challenging. We hope and pray for sensible management and leadership through these very important issues, reforms and developments.

Finally, thank you all for the work that you do, for your Christian vision, dedication and love you give to our school. The numbers of volunteers is always amazing! God bless you all.

**Hamish Mitchell**  
Board Chair 2013.





## ***From the Treasurer***

The 2012 audited financials show that we produced a trading loss of \$78,374 after 'non cash' items (like depreciation) are included.



In previous years these figures have been reported BEFORE 'non cash' items (like depreciation and any large capital grant income we might have received). This can artificially skew the figures, so to be consistent 2012 should be reported in the same manner. When this is done, it shows a surplus of \$135,458 was made whereas in 2011 we made a surplus of \$355,559 (\$193,709 in 2010).

There are 2 main reasons that this surplus figure is down on last year and on budget. They are –

- a) Government grant income was down by \$109,324 due to lower than expected student numbers and also due to reduced funding from State government due to our EMA numbers being lower than expected.
- b) There was an \$83,000 increase in our LSL provisions which had not been budgeted for.

Whilst it's always disappointing to make a loss, please keep in mind that the loss is

exacerbated by the 'non cash' adjustment for depreciation (\$214,297).

Our student numbers are increasing quite strongly in 2013 and we're confident that this year will be in surplus allowing us to spend more freely on improving our facilities over the next few years.

I'm pleased to report that the art room upgrade (incorporating new rooms for more student and teaching space) is completed on time and on budget.

Please come along to our EGM in October and be involved with the running of this wonderful school, continuing the great work in developing our students gifts and talents.

Yours sincerely,

**Iain Chaney**  
Treasurer



# Mountain District Parent Controlled Christian School Association

ACN: 005 633 670

## Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2012

	Note	2012 \$	2011 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	18,958	340,364
Trade and other receivables	6	57,106	23,338
Inventories	7	8,530	8,839
Other assets	8	44,559	58,584
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>129,153</b>	<b>431,125</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	9	5,010,220	5,114,446
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>5,010,220</b>	<b>5,114,446</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>5,139,373</b>	<b>5,545,571</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	10	189,673	200,137
Finance lease obligation	11	153,940	105,066
Short-term provisions	12	386,514	300,720
Other liabilities	13	503,437	468,329
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>1,233,564</b>	<b>1,074,252</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Loans from group companies	10	66,700	91,590
Finance lease obligation	11	931,535	1,390,758
Long-term provisions	12	17,185	20,208
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>1,015,420</b>	<b>1,502,556</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,248,984</b>	<b>2,576,808</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>2,890,389</b>	<b>2,968,763</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Reserves		662,064	662,064
Accumulated surpluses		2,228,325	2,306,699
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>2,890,389</b>	<b>2,968,763</b>



# Mountain District Parent Controlled Christian School Association

ACN: 005 633 670

## Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Revenue	3,453,158	3,311,414
Employee Benefits Expense	(2,581,026)	(2,218,840)
Finance Cost	(87,006)	(117,972)
Tuition Expense	(206,735)	(159,273)
Administration Expenses	(52,614)	(52,957)
Bad and Doubtful Debts	(23,261)	(36,423)
Other Expenses	<u>(366,593)</u>	<u>(370,389)</u>
Surplus for the year not including depreciation	<u>135,923</u>	<u>355,559</u>
Less Depreciation of Fixed Assets	(214,297)	(176,812)
Surplus(deficit) for the year	<u>(78,374)</u>	<u>178,747</u>
Other Comprehensive Income:		
Net gain on revaluation of land	-	662,064
Total Comprehensive surplus income for the year	<u>(78,374)</u>	<u>840,811</u>



## ***MDCS Staff***

Mountain District Christian School employs over forty people. In addition to teaching staff there are a number of people who work behind the scenes to support the school including educational support staff, maintenance and cleaning staff, bus staff, a chaplain, and administration team members. In 2012 we farewelled Mr. Nicholas Yap. Nicholas, who faithfully served as the Business Manager of MDCS for five years, was a tremendous asset to the MDCS community with his gentle smiling approach and diligence ensuring that the school finances were well taken care of. Replacing Mr. Yap is Mr. Tony Drummond who came to MDCS after working with our sister school MECS as the Accountant. MDCS parent and chaplain, Mr. Darryl Bridges also left MDCS at the conclusion of 2012. With a passion for assisting young people Darryl was given an opportunity to expand his work at Emerald Secondary College.



## ***Teaching Staff***

Mountain District Christian School has a talented teaching team with a range of teaching experiences and qualifications. With the growth in the school our teaching team expanded to twenty-five teaching staff in 2012. We had five new teachers join MDCS in 2012. Mrs Knight replaced Mr. Wanders who left at the conclusion



of 2011. Mrs. Holland joined MDCS as Mrs. Beaver went on maternity leave. Mr. Heckathorn joined the team as we started a new Primary class. Mrs. D. Scott, an experienced teacher of Mathematics, joined our Secondary staff. One of the new positions created was that of Deputy Principal and we were delighted to welcome Jason Riding, who previously worked as the Principal of Son Centre Christian School, to our leadership team. His experience as a leader within a Christian school is a fantastic addition to the teaching team.

Of the twenty-five teachers we had two teachers leave at the conclusion of last year, both experienced teachers. Miss Jacqui Stok moved to MECS to take up the position of Deputy Principal and Mr. Anthony Collier moved with his family to the Northern Territory to work at Nhulunbuy Christian School. There are currently no employees of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent.



### **MDCS Teachers and Qualifications:**

Miss S. Baensch	BTeach, BSc.
Mr. J. Beer	BA(Hons), GradDipEd
Mrs. A. Beever	BEd(Hons)
Mrs. J. Bratton	DipTeach, GradDipEd Studies
Mrs. L. Burke	Dip Teach
Mrs. A Callow	BPhys. Ed.
Mrs. A. Chaney	DipTeach, BEd (Conversion)
Mr. A. Collier	BA, BEd
Mrs. I. de Graaf	BA, DipEd
Mrs. E. Fensham	BA, GradDipEd
Mrs. G. Godman	BA, BTeach
Ms. S. Hanscamp	BA, DipEd, MEd
Mr. B. Heckathorn	BEd
Mrs. R. Holland	BEarlyChildhood Ed

Mrs. N. Heading	BA, DipEd
Mrs. L. Knight	BTeach, GradDip Sp. Ed, GradDip Grief Counselling
Mrs. T. Maguire	BA, DipEd
Mr. T. Nyhouse	Cert III Carpentry & Joinery, Cert IV WPT&A
Mr. C. Prior	BAgrSc, BMin, GradCertRE, GradDipEd, MA(Theol), MEd
Mr. J. Riding	BEd, GradDipChrEd
Miss B. Schout	BExSc, DipEd
Mrs. D. Scott	BA, DipEd, GradDip MathsEd
Mrs. J. Scott	BSc, GradDipEd
Miss J. Stok	BEng, BSci, GradDipEd, MEd
Mrs. C. Wyngaard	BEd, GradDipEd, MEd



## ***Teacher Professional Development***

It is a key goal of MDCS to build the capacity of the teaching team to deliver quality educational programs from a Christian perspective. While below there is an outline of some of the professional development activities undertaken, building capacity involves growing culture, establishing and providing time for staff to work in teams, as well as providing mechanisms for real growth through appraisal and professional development programs. A key component of our efforts to grow staff in their understanding of development teaching content and developing teaching practice from a Christian perspective includes our participation in

Bethlehem Tertiary Institute in New Zealand in 2012.

Professional development of teaching staff focused on building understanding of what is effective teaching, curriculum development and enhancing teaching and learning through information and computer technologies. Approximately \$1000 per teacher was spent on professional development programs in 2012. These included courses in health, well-being and safety such as first aid, anaphylaxis training and food-handling. We again utilised the opportunities made available to us for teacher development through Independent Schools Victoria. These included programs in literacy and numeracy, the use of Information and



Masters studies with the National Institute of Christian Education (The Institute). The Institute is the training arm of our national Christian schooling body, Christian Education National. Through their studies four of the MDCS teaching team have a Master of Education. Chris Prior is also involved as an adjunct lecturer with the Institute and is involved in their professional development programs such as attendance at an Asia-Pacific Christian Education conference at the

Computer Technologies in learning, and classroom management. Teachers of MDCS also are members of a number of professional groups such as the Christian Educators Professional Association, and subject based associations. These associations hold conferences and workshops in subject areas such as English, Biology, Indonesian, Physical Education, and Psychology. These are attended by MDCS staff.



## Key Student Outcomes

It is a requirement of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.) that we maintain an Attendance Register. Children between the age of six and seventeen are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are undertaking approved home tuition or correspondence education through the Distance Education Centre. Mountain District Christian



School requires parents to inform the school when their children are absent from school. Non-attendance is recorded on school reports each semester. Repeated non-attendance can have a detrimental influence on a child's

educational outcomes. In circumstances of regular non-attendance the school will look to establish meetings with parents to assist them with any issues that may be affecting attendance. In 2012 student attendance was 93.94%.

As part of teaching and learning teachers collect 'data'. This data is often very rich and can include classroom observations, work samples, assignment and test results, and standardised assessments. NAPLAN is one of the standardised assessments used by schools within Australia to inform student learning. At MDCS other standardized tests used include the South Australian Spelling Test and a number of assessment tools created by the Australian Council for Educational Research. We do recognize that standardised testing can have limitations and should not be considered in isolation from other available information on student learning. It is important, however, that data be used wisely to assist teachers, parents and students to establish good work programs within a safe environment and thus facilitate learning. Below are the NAPLAN results from 2012 and for 2011. Please note the small sample sizes.

### MDCS Students achieving National Benchmarks

	Year 3			Year 5		
	2012	2011	Change	2012	2011	Change
Student No	16	16		19	19	
Reading	100%	100%	0	100%	89%	11%
Writing	100%	100%	0	100%	100%	0
Spelling	100%	87%	13%	100%	94%	6%
Grammar and Punctuation	94%	94%	0	95%	100%	-5%
Numeracy	94%	100%	-6%	95%	100%	-5%

	Year 7			Year 9		
	2012	2011	Change	2012	2011	Change
Student No	27	26		23	25	
Reading	100%	96%	4%	100%	96%	4%
Writing	96%	92%	4%	91%	92%	-1%
Spelling	96%	92%	4%	100%	88%	12%
Grammar and Punctuation	100%	100%	0%	100%	96%	4%
Numeracy	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%

## Senior Secondary Outcomes

The Year 12 class of 2012 was one of the smallest in the history of VCE at MDCS. In all ten students completed their VCE. Despite this small number their Year 12 subjects included Chemistry, English, Further Mathematics, Geography, Health and Human Development, History: Revolutions, Mathematical Methods, Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies, Physical Education, Psychology, Specialist Mathematics and Studio Arts.



Pleasingly, all of the students who applied to VTAC for a place in a tertiary course received an offer with several students deferring until 2014 and others attending Deakin and Monash Universities.

With respect to Vocational Education and Training there were thirteen students enrolled in a VET program in 2012. These students completed 84% of their units of competency.

At the conclusion of the year there was considerable variance in their grades with two students grateful just to have passed, achieving quite low ATARs and several students achieving excellent ATARs. Of the four students who achieved an ATAR score above 80 the top score was 95.60. The median VCE Unit Study Score was above average at 31 while the mean ATAR was well below previous years at 56.83.





## Satisfaction Surveys

We desire for MDCS to be a healthy school where feedback is given by both individuals and groups to assist the school as a whole to fulfill its vision and mission. Student learning is enhanced by a strong connection between home and school and a safe and supportive school environment. Each year we survey members of the school community and groups in order to look to improve facets of our operation.

Respondents to parent and student feedback were overwhelming positive to the school. Comments from Year 12 parents included, "I don't know how you can possibly improve on perfection!" and "I cannot praise the school enough". However, there was a

comment that the school should consider with a parent saying, "There is little celebration of effort and achievement". With respect to achievement another parent gave the following comment, "While Academic achievement is important, celebrating Good Character is also a wonderful thing".



Staff survey respondents showed that many saw the school as a welcoming community where they are supported by the various subsets of the school community. Staff

value the opportunities that they have to be together in community.

They are generally not in favour of performance-based pay believing that student learning is enhanced by a team based approach.





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