



A Summary of the Meeting of Chairs and Members of Anglican School Councils held at Trinity Grammar School on the evening of Thursday 8th May 2008

The purpose of the evening was to thank and affirm the faithful service of the many people who serve on school councils throughout the Diocese. This was reiterated by each of the speakers as well as by the Archbishop. It was very encouraging to have almost every one of the forty schools represented.

In his opening remarks, Dr Bryan Cowling, Executive Director of the Anglican Commission outlined the variety of activities in which the Commission had been involved over the past year. He introduced the Commission staff and distributed a Newsletter prepared for this occasion.

In his address the Archbishop, Dr Jensen began by recognising the large number of people who give time and energy voluntarily to serve on school councils, and expressed his personal appreciation and thanks for their contribution.

He then spoke of the long standing interest the Diocese of Sydney has had in education, from the first days of the Colony, and of the desire for Anglican Schools to educate at the highest standards, and for them to be well led.

The Vision of Anglican Schooling

The schooling of children begins in the home and in the Church, and is supported in the school.

There are four elements of Anglican education:

1. To know God.

- a. This knowledge comes from a personal faith relationship, through Jesus Christ.
- b. This knowledge is grounded in the Bible.
- c. This knowledge is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Note: Knowing God is not something that we can demand of our students, but we can create a school environment in which it is encouraged. We strive to have students know God as well as know about God.

2. To know God's world.

This is a (literally secular) education – one in which we are concerned with knowing (God's) world.

- a. We use the tools of knowledge (literacy, numeracy, thought).
- b. We aim to explore and to experience the "realms of the knowable" – the created order and human culture, and to do so within the boundaries God has established.
- c. Our purpose is to serve God and to serve others.

Anglican education should be concerned with forming wholesome, fruitful and good relationships, working towards the betterment of human beings as well as respecting and valuing each individual.

3. In community.

- a. That is, learning should take place in relationship. There is a great power in good socialisation. In this regards, the traditional disciplines and activities such as team sport have an important place.
- b. That is, learning takes place individually but in the context of good pastoral care for all.

4. ***For community.***
- a. Anglican education should aim to produce responsible individuals, who are leaders in the true sense:
willing to stand against the tide
willing to take responsibility
willing to be their own men and women
leaders in their homes
willing to be responsible for others.
 - b. As a special case, Anglican education should have a special interest in, and burden for the education of our Indigenous people.

In summary, Anglican education is about knowing God, knowing God's world, in community and for community.

Some of the Challenges to Anglican Schooling

1. Finding and resourcing the Head.
There are few greater challenges than this for an Anglican school council.
2. Finding and resourcing teachers.
This challenge has a number of parts:
Recruitment of Christians into teaching.
Training of teachers
 - a. The work of the Anglican Education Commission in Teacher Education, including the partnership of the Commission with the University of Sydney is an important part.
 - b. The partnership of the Commission with Moore College and the provision of training for the teaching of Christian Studies is an important part.
 - c. The provision of relevant short in-service courses.
 - d. The encouragement of research and sharper thinking about educational theory.
3. Partnering with the family.
We are living in tumultuous times, and we need to support the family in its task of developing values in our children, with an understanding of meaning, purpose and a sense of belonging.
4. Partnering with the local church.
We need to encourage the children and families in our Anglican schools to become members of our local churches, rather than seeing church and school as disconnected. We need in our schools to ensure that we are not contradicting the message and mission of our local churches.

Supporting Anglican education

1. ***Supporting Council, in best governance practice***
 - a. The Diocesan Education Policy provides a framework for our schools.
 - b. Anglican schools will be committed to maintaining the Christian ethos of the school.
 - c. The role and contribution of the Council Chair is crucial.
 - d. The most significant responsibility of the Council is to appoint the Head of the school. It is essential that the Heads of each of our schools are Evangelical Anglicans. Being an Evangelical is a pre-requisite for any of our Heads.
2. ***The interest of the Diocese***
Anglican schools will be committed to partnering with the Diocese, which has a significant and genuine interest in its schools. It is a fundamental that Anglican schools stand for the Gospel.
3. ***Partnering with other schools***
Anglican schools will be committed to be in partnership with other schools, including other Anglican schools in the Diocese. All efforts in this direction are to be commended.