



2018 COLLOQUIUM: WHO WE ARE AND WHO WE ARE TOGETHER

How might we be as partners, as we endeavour to achieve fullness of life for all?

“... I can do things you cannot; you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.” Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

From May 31 to June 1 approximately one hundred and twenty educators, including priests and system leaders, gathered at the Mercure in Ballarat to participate in the 2018 Colloquium titled: *Who we are and who we are together. How might we be as partners, as we endeavour to achieve fullness of life for all?*

Audrey Brown, Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat, opened the Colloquium with a session titled: *Context and Updates How did we come to this place and time?* Weaving the threads of National, State and Diocesan educational agendas, Audrey provided participants with the opportunity to reflect on the priorities and realities of the past few years. The current work on School Governance and the development of partnerships and networks across the Diocese was also highlighted. The six paradigm shifts to enable capacity building including moving from: knower to enquirer; builder to pollinator; map to compass, giving answers to making spaces; critical spectator to participant; from cog to community member; were revisited. This comprehensive summary provided the background and launch into the ongoing work of developing partnerships and asking ourselves the question: What is the next horizon as we strive to be partners in Catholic Education and open to God’s presence as we pursue fullness of life for all?

The first workshop of the Colloquium was titled: *Being researchful in our own contexts, learning from our research partners.* This workshop provided participants with the opportunity to complete a pre-investigation based on their leadership experiences within the Diocese. Dialogue provided participants with the opportunity to explore existing leadership models and explore possibilities for our Diocese.

The second workshop titled: *Partnering: A system way of being, working and learning with and from each other,* began the exploration of what it might mean to be partners in our education system. Participants read the article based on Tennyson’s (2011) work, “Leaders as Partners”. Participants then had the opportunity to explore the partnering principles including: Equity of voice; mutual benefit; and transparency.

The third workshop was titled: *Surfacing our hopes, dreams and fears.* This was an opportunity to voice aspirations and concerns as we move into partnership relationships across the Diocese. The workshop then centered on beginning to address some of the issues that the system might need to attend to and commit to in the future.

The final workshop was an opportunity to track the strengths and development of partnering, it was titled: *How will we be, learn and work together as a system?* During the workshop activities there was time for table collaboration, individual reflection and whole group sharing and exploration.

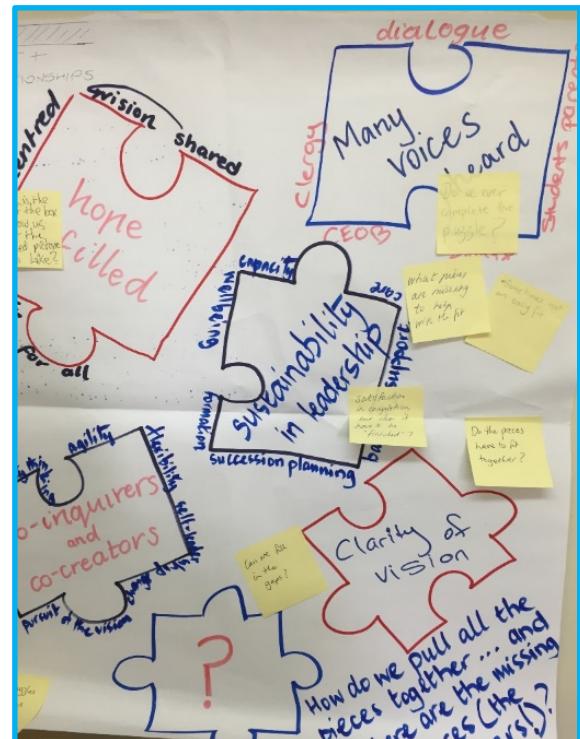
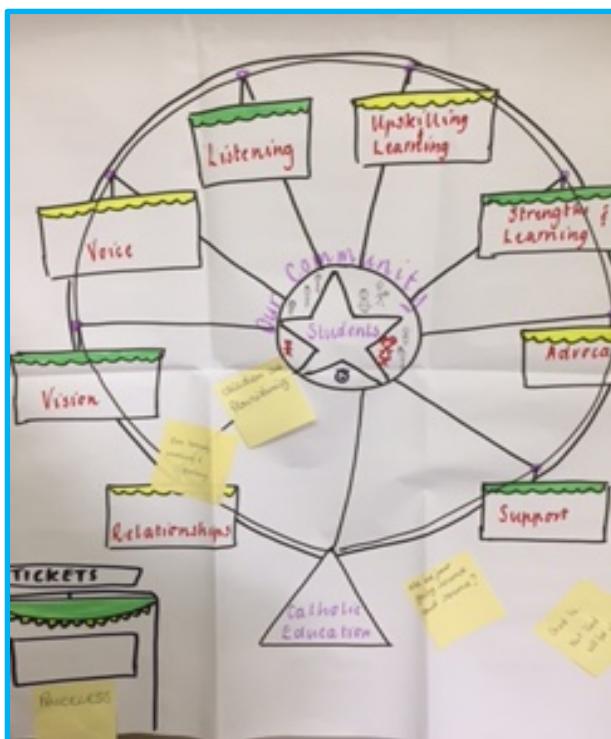
Some of the key themes that began to emerge at the colloquium included:

- The need to have a shared purpose and vision –the Good News of Catholic Education needs to be shared across the Diocese.

- Relationships need to be built on trust – this includes listening, supporting, challenging, coaching and being respectful in conversations.
- The need to look for new opportunities and ways to work together – to partner.
- The need to be more creative, innovative, risk taking and to focus on opportunities.
- Innovation: exploring new possibilities, supporting new ways of thinking, being and resourcing.
- The need to target Leadership and Formation.
- The possible changes to accountability.
- The need to focus on quality teaching. Developing shared understandings and beliefs about good practice.

It is planned to continue the discussions held during the Colloquium, over the next six months within meetings that are held in our various zones. These discussions, deliberations and decisions will then inform the system goals as the next strategic plan is developed.

Below are two examples of the collaborative posters that were developed during the colloquium.



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