19 January 2015

Dear Parents

A New Adventure for Tyndale Christian School

Happy New Year! I trust you have had an enjoyable and restful time with your children over the school holidays and are now almost ready to release them back into our care.

Much has happened over the last few weeks and this letter will attempt to provide you with a comprehensive update. Another more general letter will be sent to you shortly regarding local information about Term 1 here at Tyndale (Salisbury East).

On 24 December of last year, a formal Merger Implementation Agreement was signed between Tyndale Christian School Inc (TCS) and three other organisations. These are Emmanuel Christian Schools and Ministries (ECSM), Murraylands Christian College – Strathalbyn and Murraylands Christian College – Murray Bridge. ECSM has been the overarching authority of both schools and holds the land titles for both properties, and in order to acquire the two schools, TCS needed to take responsibility for ECSM as well. This Agreement has paved the way for Tyndale Christian School Inc. to take full control of both the governance and operations of the two schools.

On 13 January the Boards of ESCM and the two Murraylands schools resigned from their positions after accepting new constitutions that empower TCS to control the schools and also accepting TCS as the single member of each of the three Boards. On 15 January all paperwork was completed and TCS became the legal authority of the three entities. This is a very exciting outcome, not only for the two Murraylands schools, whose futures are now far more secure, but also TCS as it takes on the responsibility of governing and leading these two schools. Our prayer is that, with God’s guidance, we will see these two schools flourish and grow and become exemplary educational institutions in their own right in their regions.

I wish to acknowledge the support and hard work of our Board of Governors, who under the leadership of our Chair, Mr Nigel Glenn, have overseen this entire process and provided great assistance to the leadership team here at TCS as we have brought this operation to a successful conclusion. Without their faith and passion for this venture, such an outcome would not have been possible. Secondly, I would also like to acknowledge the support of the lawyers at Minter Ellison, Baron Partners (a consulting company specialising in mergers and acquisitions) and Resolve Consulting (a Christian consulting company specialising in working with non-government schools) for their expert advice, hard work and outstanding support throughout this time as well. Finally, I would like to thank my leadership team, and especially our Business Manager Andrew Davies, our Deputy Business Manager Erin Kluge, the Head of Senior School Gavin Kinch, and our Community Relations and Marketing Officer Danielle Hohneck, for their unrelenting, and exceptional work in seeing this acquisition become a reality, and for the tireless way they have performed their duties in ensuring that the two schools will be in the best possible shape going into 2015.

The acquisition of the two schools has necessitated a number of significant changes which I will detail below. However, I wish to assure you from the start that none of these changes will impact on the operations of TCS here at Salisbury East. The two new schools will remain independent associations in their own right, they will have their own school leadership teams and finance officers, and they will have their own separate registrations, budgets and relationships with educational authorities and financial institutions. TCS will not be acting as financial guarantor for these two
schools and no financial assistance will be provided to them from Salisbury East, and all income from Salisbury East will be devoted to Salisbury East.

However, there will be some changes.

Firstly, I am very excited to advise you that our two new schools have new names! They are now Tyndale Christian School (Strathalbyn) and Tyndale Christian School (Murray Bridge). While they are still separate schools, they have joined the Tyndale family and we believe that it is only right and proper that they adopt our name. They have taken on our vision and mission, our corporate values and purpose and our corporate image, including our logo and motto. In terms of ethos, purpose and vision, they have become “Tyndalian”. As I write to you their signs are being changed and their buses are being re-badged! Issues such as possible changes to their school uniform will be considered once the new year has gotten underway and we have all had a chance to take a break. I trust that all of us here at Salisbury East will find opportunities in the near future to welcome them to the wider Tyndale family.

Secondly, our Board of Governors has now become the Board of the two new Tyndale schools as well and I ask that you pray for them and support them as they take on these new responsibilities. They will be facing longer meetings, more work and significant travel times as they govern the three Tyndale Schools. If you meet up with them at any time, I am sure that they would be most grateful of your encouragement and support.

There will also be some changes in the responsibilities of some of our leaders here at Tyndale (Salisbury East). As of this week, I will be relinquishing some of my day-to-day responsibilities here at Salisbury East to take on the overall leadership of all three schools. This will necessitate regular trips to Murray Bridge and Strathalbyn to support and oversee the leadership teams there. As a consequence, while I will still be based here at Salisbury East and still have significant involvement in the overall leadership and direction of the school, I will no longer be referred to as the Principal of TCS but as the Head of Schools of the Tyndale Group of Schools, or Head of Schools for short! This means that my time will be spread across the three schools to ensure that they are all doing well. To avoid confusion and as part of increasing the authority of our current Heads of sub-schools here at TCS, they are now Principals in their own right. Therefore, their new titles are:

- Graeme Holmes, Principal (Junior School)
- Phil Jones, Principal (Middle School)
- Gavin Kinch, Principal (Senior School) – Mr Kinch will deputise for me when I am away.

This will mean that in most cases, the sub-school Principals will now be the highest level of authority to which families and staff will engage with when dealing with school matters. Therefore, I encourage you to connect with them and work with them and their staff for the benefit of the education of your children.

Other major role changes for personnel here are as follows:

- Andrew Davies is now the Director of Corporate Services - and has the overall responsibility for the finances, property, and administration of the three schools
- Erin Kluge is now the Business Manager of TCS Salisbury East, reporting to Andrew Davies
- Danielle Hohneck is now the Director of Community Relations/Marketing for the three schools
- Meredith Lockery has relinquished her role as Director of Learning in the Junior School to enable her to concentrate on overseeing and supporting the teaching and learning in the three schools. Meredith Lockery has also relinquished her role as counsellor in the Junior School
- Ceri Stanley has been appointed as the Director of Learning in the Junior School
- Wendy Jolley and Simon Gill are now Deputy Principals of their respective sub-schools
- Jan Lonsdale has been appointed as Head of Counselling Services and she, along with Ged Pilon and Vanessa Bendikov will be taking on the responsibility of providing counselling to students from Reception to Year 12
In other news ...........

**Sampson Flat Bushfire**
Over two dozen of our families were directly affected by the recent bushfire at Sampson Flat and surrounding areas. Many were evacuated, while some stayed to defend their homes. I am very pleased to advise you that though some lost stock and pets as well as ancillary buildings, no houses were lost. Many came close to burning, but effective fire prevention methods and the tireless and extraordinary work of the CFS prevented them from doing so. However, it has not been without some cost. One of our family members working with the CFS has been hospitalised due to trauma to his kidneys due to intense dehydration (he is now recovering slowly but surely), there have been minor physical injuries (mainly burns), as well as the personal loss of pets and stock. There has also been the emotional toll exacted because of the ordeal, and sometimes this takes longer to overcome than physical pain.

While we are very grateful to God that He has watched over our wider school community we must not neglect to continue to pray for those affected as they deal with the aftermath of such a horrifying event. It is also important to remember that some families have not been as fortunate as ours. At least twenty families have lost their homes and personal belongings, some irreplaceably. Please continue to pray for them and support them during this very difficult time. There are many outstanding organisations supporting these families, including organisations supported by TCS folk, and it has been wonderful to see the people of Adelaide rally around so compassionately to care for their neighbours. A number of Old Tyndalians and school family members are a part of the CFS and MFS and their bravery and skill is both highly praised and gratefully acknowledged.

**Capital Programme**
The new Middle School Performing Arts Centre is expected to be completed by mid-February which is very exciting. This will provide an outstanding new venue for our music and drama programmes. Tours of the new facility will be organised in due course.

The Middle School Home Economics Centre and parts of Block Three in the Senior School have had split-cycle Air-conditioning units installed and these will be ready for the commencement of Term 1.

The Year Five bag rack shelter has been completed, as has the new bin enclosure. The paving and landscaping of that area is expected to be completed by the commencement of Term 1 as well.

**Computer Device Rollout**
Please remember that if you are a parent of a student in Year 4, Year 7, Year 8 or Year 10, the new 1:1 student device roll-out commences over the next few weeks. Details have already been sent out and I urge you to make sure you come to the meetings arranged to explain how the roll-out will occur and to hand over the student devices.

**And finally ....**
Please remember that school recommences on Monday 2 February. More details about the first day and also the sub-school commencement services will be sent to you shortly.

God bless

Mike Potter
Head of Schools