



## **AN ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE**

We write to share some very exciting news - Wahroonga Preparatory School, St John's Church congregation and Knox Grammar School are discussing an alliance for mutual benefit in 2015 & beyond.

In the last few weeks, an agreement has been reached on the framework from which we will seek to work together; and based on considerable common ground and an enthusiasm to gain benefits from a shared future, our governing councils have agreed to move forward.

With shared values from all being under the Uniting Church of Australia umbrella and a common history dating back 90 years, we had expected a common starting point, but our conversation has developed faster and with greater enthusiasm than any of us anticipated.

At the moment we have an agreement on the framework for an alliance – some principles upon which we hope to build a working relationship. The framework has been approved by the Uniting Church's Mission and Education board. However, there is still a long way to go to establish what this might actually mean on a day-to-day basis.

In general terms, we are working towards an alliance which would provide for:

- Wahroonga Prep to be the focus of investment and growth for the benefit of students and teachers. There would be an ability to access the resources, programs and facilities of Knox (for music and sport for example) to strengthen the school whilst still maintaining the points of difference – small class sizes, co-educational environment, small school atmosphere and the fee differential.
- St John's Church congregation to grow by being part of a larger Uniting Church community, and for investment in the maintenance and development of the buildings and precinct.
- Knox to achieve the vision for a multi-campus school with added expertise from Wahroonga Prep in the younger years of schooling (especially pre-kindergarten), and a co-educational environment to complement the programs offered in the later years through an arrangement with a girls school.

It is early days and fair to say that so far we have focused on the framework for working together. Over the December-January period, we will be turning our attention to the operational details – actual benefits for immediate and longer-terms.

The following page summarises the framework for an agreement and some of the possibilities which may eventuate – remembering of course that this needs to be worked out over the next 12 months and must pass through each organisation's approvals processes.

As you and your families prepare for the end of 2014 and the commencement of 2015, we wanted you to be aware of these exciting developments and we hope we have your support as we explore the possibilities for the future.

We look forward to updating you early in the new year. God bless you for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

**Tracey Cain**  
Chair, Wahroonga Prep

**Kit Craig**  
Chair, St John's Church

**Peter Roach**  
Chair, Knox Grammar School

## WAHROONGA PREP

Retaining small class sizes, co-education, small school atmosphere and fee differential.

A commitment to current staff and students for the duration of their time at the school.

Investment in marketing and further sustainable growth in enrolments.

Facilitated introduction to a girls school for a placement and programs arrangement for the benefit of girls.

Ensure the consistency of senior staff, including the Principal, for operational uniformity.

## ST JOHN'S CHURCH CONGREGATION

Restoration of the historic links between St John's and Knox to build a broader Uniting Church community and congregation.

Immediate maintenance and improvement of facilities including painting, cleaning, gardening and repairs, at no cost to Wahroonga Prep or St John's. This may occur over the Christmas holidays.

Creation of a three-way precinct management committee to manage property details for the precinct. The first priority will be the development of a Property Master Plan and Strategy for the precinct.

## KNOX GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Achievement of a multi-campus school.

Strengthening of the prep school with additional staff, students and facilities.

Linkages to a co-educational prep school to complement the programs offered at Knox in later years through an association with a girls school.

Extending the Uniting Church mission to assist another Church school.

Restoration of the historic links with St John's – until the school's Chapel was built in 1962, St John's was the spiritual home for Knox students.

# FRAMEWORK

## POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

A boost in teacher training, resources and access to programs at Knox including sport, music, enrichment and special needs.

Benefits of being able to leverage scale for back office efficiencies - ICT support, site maintenance and repairs, canteen supplies and resourcing, transport services, clothing pool management etc.

Guaranteed entry into other schools for Wahroonga Prep students, with a single enrolment fee for Wahroonga Prep/Knox.

Safe drop off/pick up zone for use during school hours, after hours by the congregation as a car park.

Development of a pedestrian movement strategy including a crossing on Stuart Street.

Property acquisition and expansion strategy including the current opportunity on Illoura Road.

**NEXT STEPS:** Discussions at an operational level in Dec-Jan and into the new school year.

Restoration and modernisation of the St John's Church including repair of the roof, creation of disabled access to the Church and repair to the stone boundary fence.

Subject to approval by the St John's congregation – redevelopment of the Manse within heritage guidelines as the shopfront for the precinct – including colocation of the church office in the building.

Relocation of the St John's Minister to a family house within walking distance of St John's and with facilities to host bible study.

Safe drop off/pick up zone for use during school hours, after hours by the congregation as a car park.

Development of a pedestrian movement strategy including a crossing on Stuart Street.

Property acquisition and expansion strategy including the current opportunity on Illoura Road.

**NEXT STEPS:** St John's Council will meet on Wed 10 Dec to discuss the framework for an alliance and invites the congregation.

**NEXT STEPS:** Working with Wahroonga Prep and St John's during Dec-Jan and beyond.