



MOUNT EVELYN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL + RANGESTEC

# 2022 Annual Report



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# Who We Are

## MECS Vision

Seeking the Kingdom of God in Education

## MECS Mission

We provide Parent-governed, Christ-centred schooling with learning experiences that challenge each student to actively live for God in His world, while partnering with Christian parents in the nurture of their children at a price affordable to those who are committed.

## Covenantal Values

1. We underpin who we are and what we do with biblical **Foundations**.
2. We facilitate a lasting vision by building a strong and developing **Association**.
3. We partner with committed **Parents** to assist them in fulfilling their God-given responsibility for nurturing their children.
4. We achieve our mission through empowered **Leadership** and effective **Organisation**.
5. We employ Christian **Staff** who can effectively and wholeheartedly provide Christian education.
6. We nurture and equip **Students** for a life of service.
7. We develop and implement effective Christian **Teaching** and **Learning** practices and resources.
8. We employ prudent **Finance** and **Resource** management practices to enable our mission.
9. We construct functional and high quality **Infrastructure** that facilitates the educational process.
10. We seek to have a healthy, caring and connected **Community**.
11. We live out the truth of the Kingdom of God in our **External Relationships** with the wider community.



# 2022 Annual Report

## MOUNT EVELYN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL & RANGESTEC

Mount Evelyn Christian School presently has two campuses: a Kindergarten to Year 12 school of 672 students and Ranges TEC, a vocational trade training centre and VCAL provider with 91 students.

MECS campus is situated on 15 acres in the beautiful foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, while Ranges TEC occupies four factory units in Lilydale and an eleven acre farm at Monbulk. Both campuses provide a Christ-centred, biblically based and integrated curriculum in partnership with its parent community. Students are encouraged to live out a faithful Christian response in all that they do in their lives.

Welcome to the 2022 Annual Report. At this time each year, all schools across the nation are required to give an account to their school community of the things that have been happening over the past year in the school's life. It is a good thing to reflect and be accountable to you, the MECS community.

This Annual Report is designed to give a 'snapshot' of the school community; its activities, general health, finances, enrolments, some assessments on educational results and how it is tracking in meeting its goals.

It is our hope that through this Annual Report you can see MECS' mandate of 'seeking the kingdom of God in education' is being outplayed and that you are vital partners in this thriving and vibrant community that seeks to pursue this vision.

## Enrolment and Attendance

### Total Students enrolled at MECS and Ranges TEC for 2022

<b>MECS (Kinder to Year 12)</b>	<b>672</b>
Overall Attendance for MECS 2022	86.46%
Boys	85.72%
Girls	86.95%
<b>Ranges TEC</b>	<b>91</b>
Overall Attendance for Ranges TEC 2022	82.9%
Boys	84.73%
Girls	72.29%

# Board Chair's Report

SUE GOUDSWAARD | BOARD CHAIR



Welcome to the 50th Annual Report of the Association for Christian Education of Mount Evelyn Inc. As always, the Board gives thanks to our God for his steadfast love and faithfulness to this community over the last year.

Team and their significant contributions: Gerry Beimers, Lisa Dumicich, Ric Thorpe, Janet Anderson and Karissa Esselbrugge. From our treasured groundsmen to professional teaching staff, you are all greatly appreciated. The Association thanks you for partnering with us in our core mission.

One focus of the Board this year has been on the growing needs of diverse, inclusive educational pathways that require additional infrastructure. At the 2022 EGM the Association endorsed the Board's Infrastructure Master Plan in support of these growing needs. The Board have also given time to discussion around issues of inclusion. It is our desire to create an environment where all children can flourish safely and be the best they can be in faithful service to God. The Board has empowered the leadership of the school to ensure a loving, caring and supportive environment.

This Association has, for over fifty years, remained committed to honouring God in the task given to parents to raise their children according to his ways by partnering with professional educators committed to this task. The current Board, elected by the Association, have remained faithful to the task of governing the school, facilitating the health and strength of the operations in order to make all the good stuff happen!

Finances have been strained due to some families falling behind in the payment of their school fees post the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Board continues to assist those where able and have implemented processes to collect outstanding fees.

I take this opportunity to thank the faithful and dedicated Board Members from this past year: Bretlyn Bailey for serving as Board Chair (completed his term in May 2022), Peter McTier (resigned in June 2022), Chris Paech (resigned in May 2022), Rob Lichtendonk - Treasurer, Tim Van Der Veen, Alison Osborne, Nicole Nyhouse and Paul Bouma. Due to the passion and commitment of these folk, I can readily attest to the fact that the vision of our founders, more than 50 years on, is thriving today. I ask you as Association Members, to continue to uphold these Board members in prayer.

The most important role of the Board is to select and maintain good relationships with the leadership of the school, especially the Principal. As you are aware, our current Principal advised the Board mid-year in 2022 of her intention not to renew her contract from the end of 2023. The Board has been diligently working on recruitment for her replacement and contingencies for the loss of such a gifted leader. Narelle will be sorely missed.

The 'good stuff' wouldn't happen without the faithful service of our staff. A special thanks to our Principal, Narelle Sketcher. She is such a wise, well equipped, professional, dedicated servant of Christian Education, both here at MECS and Ranges TEC, and is also a huge contributor to our wider movement, Christian Education National. We also acknowledge the Senior Leadership

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His love endures forever.

Sue Goudswaard  
Board Chair

# Principal's Report

NARELLE SKETCHER | PRINCIPAL (MECS)



## Unique Learning Opportunities for Each Student

At the heart of Mount Evelyn Christian School and central to our mission, is the desire to create a Christ-centred learning environment where students are challenged to actively live for God in His world. As such, MECS and Ranges TEC continue to be places where from the Kindergarten through to Year 12, the curriculum, facilities and structures are designed to challenge young people to explore, understand and respond to God's amazing creation. Learning happens in all sorts of places: the classroom, the factory, the farm, the playground and on our many camps and excursions. We want our students to not only gain head knowledge, but for also their hearts to be changed and their hands to respond. This is how we would explain the getting of wisdom. Our teaching and learning framework as published in our book Transformational Education continues to be at the centre of 'how' we do education at Mount Evelyn Christian School. It reminds us that each child is uniquely different and that we need to nurture the diversity of each one. It also reminds us that as Christian educators we need to be continually reflecting on the practices of our school to make sure they are aligned with the full biblical story, and we are teaching for transformation, from transformation! That is, each staff member brings his transformed self to this important task each day.

## Infrastructure Masterplan

After numerous delays in recent years, we were pleased to present our new Infrastructure Development Plan to our Association in October 2022. This Plan sees significant investment in our secondary school over the next 15 years! We are excited that the first stage of this Plan is well underway with a detailed design being presented at the upcoming AGM. This first stage will see a new administration centre, new Food Technology facilities, eight flexible learning spaces and a new Community Hub for a range of learning and community events. This development is a bold and ambitious plan setting up learning for the next generation of students here at MECS. We look forward to sharing more of this exciting Plan with you as it unfolds.

## Satisfaction Surveys

Over the last nine years, parents, staff and students have all had the opportunity to participate in a number of satisfaction surveys facilitated by our national body, Christian Education National. These surveys have been invaluable in giving us a sense of what areas are going well at MECS and what areas need further development.

In 2022, staff had the opportunity to participate in another such survey. This time, the survey was facilitated



internally so that we could make sure that the feedback collected was specific to the circumstances and profile of our school. The results and feedback from the survey was shared with our staff community throughout the year and we continue to work on areas of concern together. However, overwhelmingly, we are thrilled that our staff have a strong sense of purpose and mission in their work at MECS and Ranges TEC. Satisfaction surveys are an important way of how we partner with the various constituents within our school, making sure that we are on the right track and making the right improvements and investments. We look forward to hearing from our students in 2023!

### **Continuing to Grow a Vibrant Association**

Mount Evelyn Christian School believes that a growing and vibrant Association is the heartbeat of a healthy Christian school and vital for safeguarding the vision of 'seeking the Kingdom of God in education.' Activities such as the New Parent Dinner and the Parent Seminars are used to introduce families to what the Association is and who is eligible to apply for membership. Continued growth and participation in our Association continues to be an important priority for us moving forward, particularly as we move towards a significant period of infra-structure development in the next few years. We look forward to welcoming more members into our Association at our AGM!

### **New Season for MECS**

Whilst much of the year is still before us, I am aware that this will be my last contribution to the Annual Report as Principal. As the Board is soon to finalise its' recruitment process, can I encourage you to continue to be in prayer for God's choice of leader for this community?

MECS is a unique place and has been central to my formation as a person and educator, having spent 23 years as part of this community. Being the Principal for the last ten years, has been a great honour and privilege. Why? Because the task that we do is so important. To be instrumental in creating spaces and opportunity where young people can flourish in their learning, personal development and faith is the best job in the world! To the Board, Association and community, thanks for your trust, support and encouragement. I look forward to working with the soon-to-be appointed Principal on a successful transition.

Narelle Sketcher  
Principal



# Director's Report

RICTHORPE | DIRECTOR (RANGES TEC)



## 10th Anniversary Year

As we celebrated our 10th anniversary, it was inspiring to remember the blessing of God to have been able to establish a Christian Trade Training Centre to educate children who are hands-on learners. Our 10th Anniversary Dinner was celebrated with the Principals of our three founding schools, Mountain District Christian School, Donvale Christian College and Mount Evelyn Christian School, as well as MP David Hodgett and David Gallagher (VCAA representative), and with past students, their families, Michelle Dempsey (CEN), and a panel of employers who have employed our students. Past student Spencer Goodridge and Ross Theunissen hosted a fantastic evening full of memories, laughs and remembering those who worked hard for the success of Ranges TEC. The founding school Principals received handsaws that had been signed by the original founders. Most of all, we gave thanks to God for providing the establishing and ongoing blessing of Ranges TEC.

We began with an overfull Year 10, 31 students, a solid Year 11 with 36 students and 20 Year 12 students, which is our biggest to date. In our annual Mid-Year-Intake another 11 students joined us to commence their applied learning education. We also had a record high enrolment of VET external students for the Yarra Valley VET Cluster. Ranges

TEC is highly regarded by the school of the Yarra Valley as a quality VET provided.

## Graduation

Graduations are always a highlight. This was the first time we have had to go off site due to our high number of graduates, 22. It was held at the York on Lilydale. Without doubt what makes Ranges TEC graduations so amazing is the way they capture the individuality of each student. Each student's journey was honored in a way that highlighted their unique journey by their teachers.

## Registered Training Organisation - RTO

Our RTO has grown again this year in delivering more short courses. We are delighted that Certificate II in Auslan has passed VRQA registration and we are now registered to deliver this course, which will commence in 2023.

## Visitors to Ranges TEC

This year we have had many prominent politicians visit Ranges TEC including Opposition Leader Peter Dutton, Senator Michaelia Cash, David Hodgett and Bridget Vallence. John Firth (leader of the VCAL education reform) also visited.

Ric Thorpe  
Director











# Professional Development

LISA DUMICICH | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (MECS)

## Teacher Professional Learning

At MECS and Ranges TEC, the professional learning for teachers can be categorised into the following categories: developing transformative Christian education, general teaching (content & pedagogy), and workplace professional learning (such as First Aid and mandatory reporting). Both Campuses continue to be places with a thriving and positive professional learning culture.

## Developing Transformative Christian Education

2022 saw a sustained return of our normal professional development program compared with the COVID impacted previous two years. This meant we were able to run our full suite of professional development and fully utilise our work breaks

## Transformational Education

MECS' book, Transformational Education, is our framework for Teaching and Learning. It focusses on 16 facets that describe the MECS approach to various aspects of teaching and learning from a Christian perspective. All teaching staff are provided with a copy of this book and we explore aspects of it in various settings.

## Transformation by Design

All teachers are provided with a copy of this CEN curriculum resource which outlines MECS' approach to curriculum development. This is an important resource for MECS and Ranges TEC teachers in the development of curriculum and pedagogy from a Biblical perspective.

## Induction

At the beginning of the 2022 school year, new teachers to MECS and Ranges TEC began the Induction program with a whole day professional development program to introduce them to the philosophy of MECS and an opportunity to spend time with their mentors. All new staff are allocated an experienced staff member as a mentor, who they journey with throughout their first year. All new

staff completed the Certificate of Christian Education (CCE) and participated in mentoring sessions throughout the year.

## General Teaching – Content & Pedagogy

Teacher meetings in 2022 were dedicated to a range of areas such as: learning to use Schoolbox for continuous reporting, using Compass as our new student management system, Learning Intentions, Education Support training, section specific meetings and innovations, strengthening mentor/ mentee relationships, updating and documenting curriculum in ATLAS, strengthening faculty areas across the school, using STARS and CARS in the Primary School, continued understanding of AITSL teaching standards, and the ongoing understanding of the Victorian Curriculum.

## Workplace Professional Learning

All teaching staff undertook the annual Mandatory Reporting training during the year and completed the second 4 modules of the Disability Standards modules. At the conclusion of 2022, most MECS and Ranges TEC teaching staff had completed First Aid and Anaphylaxis training.

## Accountability

In 2022, we continued to use our BINGO Professional Learning process. BINGO is an acronym for Building In Growth Opportunities, and this approach recognises that we are embedding these opportunities into our already healthy professional learning culture. All teachers receive a BINGO board with a range of activities, and it is their responsibility to complete five of these in a row. In 2022, we continued a focus on tasks related to classroom observations (feedback and review) in keeping with the Australian Teaching and Professional Development Framework (ATPDF). BINGO boards range in complexity depending on the experience of the teacher. All 'lines' include a Professional Learning Conversation with a



member of leadership which focusses on reflection and goal-setting. In 2022, we expanded the use of the 'staff review' component of EMS360 to direct these conversations and record set goals.

Total teacher PD expenditure for both MECS and Ranges TEC in 2022 was \$67,622 or approximately \$716 per teacher at MECS and \$836 per teacher at Ranges TEC.



# NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program Literacy And Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses all students in Australian schools in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. The table of results show that a very high proportion of MECS students are meeting or exceeding Australian minimum benchmarks across all year levels and test areas. However, the increased number of students below national minimum standards in 2022 demonstrates the impact to learning from the extended lockdowns and remote learning. We have actively intervened in their learning across 2022 to attempt to catch those students up to their peers.

*Please note, in 2020 the education ministers decided that NAPLAN testing would not proceed that year due to the COVID-19 pandemic so there are no results for that year.*

Teachers at Mount Evelyn Christian School are involved in the continual monitoring of our students' academic performance, including the NAPLAN tests for students at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Monitoring is not confined to one test on one day, but rather is supported by a range of mechanisms, including other annual assessments such as those developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research and Essential Assessments tests.

MECS NAPLAN results are reported on the ACARA My School website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au>), in line with government requirements. While we do not encourage NAPLAN results to be used as a comparative measure of school performance, we do believe that NAPLAN testing is a useful tool for diagnostic purposes for individual students, and is used as such by all teachers.

## 2022 NAPLAN Results

Proportion of students meeting or exceeding National Minimum standards		2022	2021	2019
Reading	Year 3	100	98	100
	Year 5	97	100	100
	Year 7	97	100	98
	Year 9	98	92	98
Writing	Year 3	98	100	100
	Year 5	96	100	100
	Year 7	97	97	98
	Year 9	87	84	94
Spelling	Year 3	98	93	94
	Year 5	97	100	100
	Year 7	93	97	97
	Year 9	92	89	96
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	100	98	97
	Year 5	97	100	100
	Year 7	96	98	97
	Year 9	98	90	96
Numeracy	Year 3	97	100	97
	Year 5	96	100	100
	Year 7	96	100	100
	Year 9	100	98	98

# VCE Summary

The Senior Secondary School at MECS continues to uphold the importance of teaching subjects from a biblical perspective, framing teaching moments which invite questioning, curiosity, reflection, and responsive action. We also maintain the importance of perspectival subjects such as Philosophy of Ideas (POI) in Year 12, and Faith in Action at Year 11 as another means to demonstrate the distinctive nature of Christian Education in the VCE years here at MECS.

Considering the inclusive, supportive approach to our VCE program, MECS is able to provide a strong pathway to facilitate all students in achieving their best in the VCE. We hope to 'foster a culture of effective learning, encouraging students to be faithful in their office (as students) and to academic faithfulness' (Transformational Education, p.139), at whatever level of ability the student is capable.

In 2022, there were fifteen students completing a Unit 3 & 4 subject who were granted Special Examination Arrangements (SEAs). This represents a substantial commitment by the school to provide students with various additional learning needs, every opportunity to perform at their best whilst completing their VCE. There were also five derived examination scores applied for and approved by VCAA in 2022 due to interruptions to examination preparation or completion.

The class of 2022 encountered some very real challenges in completing their VCE. This group has had a very disrupted learning journey over the past few years due to COVID and this has undoubtedly played a role in affecting the students' academic habits, emotional maturity, social cohesiveness, and general resilience. Despite these impacts, it is pleasing to see a positive result overall as a cohort.

The following is a summary and reflection on the 2022 VCE results by the students at MECS.

In 2022 35 students enrolled in the VCE 3&4 program (Year 12).

## Summary of VCE results in 2022

Average ATAR	Highest ATAR achieved	Median study score	Percentage study score over 40	Percentage satisfactory VCE completion 2022	Percentage students who received an offer	Percentage first round offers
70.47	91.85	29	3.9%	100%	96.30%	88.89%

## ATAR Distribution in 2022

ATAR Range	Number of Students (%)
0.00 – 35.00	0
35.01 - 70.00	64.5
70.01- 99.95	35.5





# Finances

## Income

Tuition Fees (inc Kinder)	\$ 4,444,389
Government Grants	\$12,204,671
Other Income	\$471,272
Support for Ranges TEC	\$0
Capital grants and donations	\$83,476
Interest	\$47
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$17,203,855</b>

## Expenses

Salaries	\$13,542,884
Educational Materials	\$933,668
Maintenance & Grounds & Operations	\$530,005
Administration	\$ 873,905
Community Development	\$ 103,717
Bus Costs	\$116,426
Levies	\$94,099
Staff Training	\$153,825
Interest	\$105,977
Leases	\$ 59,514
Fees Written Off as Bad Debts/Provision	\$8,302
Depreciation	\$1,255,408
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$17,777,730</b>

<b>TOTAL NET SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>(\$573,875)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b> <i>excluding capital grants</i>	<b>(\$657,351)</b>
Earnings Before Interest & Depreciation	\$787,510
Earnings Before Interest & Depreciation <i>excluding capital grant</i>	\$704,034





135 York Road  
Mount Evelyn VIC 3796

Tel (03) 9738 6000

office@mecs.vic.edu.au  
[www.mecs.vic.edu.au](http://www.mecs.vic.edu.au)