

Dear Members of the St Mary's College Community,

I write to advise the St Mary's College Community, on behalf of Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) and the St Mary's College Advisory Council, the following exciting news which will bring certainty and promise for the future of Catholic secondary co-education in East St Kilda.

Capital works Program

Our capital works program will commence this year at the Edmund Rice Campus (ERC), Westbury St campus and will be funded by a \$1.5million Australian Government grant and college funds, which will equal over \$3million. The works will include a general refurbishment of teaching and learning spaces including the development of a textiles, food technology areas. The provision of a Year 12 Study Centre will also be incorporated into the Library at ERC.

In October this year, the college will apply for a Victorian Government Grant of up to \$2.4 million to strengthen these refurbishments with a reinvigoration of Logue Hall. This will include new lighting, sound and acoustics and the reconfiguration of the performance spaces.

Presentation Campus Lease

St Mary's College has leased the Presentation Campus for three years of a five-year lease. This lease will be terminated in September 2024. This will bring savings to the college to fund purposeful educational facilities and resources at ERC. The Presentation Campus will be used until then, to minimise disruption to learning, while capital works are undertaken at ERC.

Catholic secondary education is coming home to Westbury Street!

The thinking behind this announcement has been:

1. ERC on Westbury Street is owned by the college whereas the Presentation Campus is leased.
2. The Australian government grant was approved for works at ERC.
3. To bring both campuses up to a modern educational standard, funds well beyond what would reasonably be expected of our community would be required.
4. ERC can comfortably accommodate approximately 850 students with minor refurbishments into the future.

I believe these decisions are in the best interests of the educational and wellbeing needs of our students and secures the college's future.

The college, together with Edmund Rice Education Australia, are grateful to the Presentation Sisters for their financial and other extensive support to us over the last three years. The work of our Advisory Council and EREA has also been significant in the progress of our school.

These announcements along with the appointment of the next principal Darren Atkinson and strong enrolment interest, ensures a secure and optimistic future for the evolution of Catholic secondary co-education in East St Kilda.

Central to the success of any child's education is a relationship of shared values and trust between the child's parents and carers and their school. I would like to acknowledge the strength of that relationship at St Mary's College.

Our college now has the opportunity to continue to develop a real sense of community on one campus, that will satisfy the deep need for belonging and identity shared by us all.

Your sincerely,



Michael Lee OAM
College Principal (Acting)

Monday, October 2, 2023

