

GOVERNANCE REFORMS UPDATE

17 December 2018



To the PMSA school community

Three months on from the announcement of our governance reforms, we are pleased to report on our progress.

I have been working closely with the PMSA Board, Principals, School Councils and our Corporate Office to implement these changes and I look forward to continuing the transformation process in the New Year.

Key Changes

PMSA Constitution

Last week the PMSA Board, Presbyterian Church's Commission of Assembly and the Uniting Church's Synod Standing Committee approved an eagerly anticipated update of our Constitution. Key changes include:

- Identifying School Councils in the Constitution
- Reducing the number of Board Members and limiting tenure to nine years
- An outline of how the PMSA reports to the Churches
- Details on Church Moderator visitor rights to attend PMSA meetings
- A list of definitions and interpretations including our Christian doctrine.

The new Constitution is now available on the [PMSA website](#).

PMSA Board

The following changes are focussed on improving the Board's functionality:

- The Board has been reduced to 13 members with five members appointed by each of the two Churches and three independent Board-appointed members.
- The PMSA's Strategic Plan for 2019-2023, which will be launched in early 2019, strictly focusses on initiatives at a group-level to preserve each school's own strategic vision.
- The 'PMSA Council' name has been changed to 'PMSA Board'.
- The agenda of Board meetings has shifted attention to group governance and strategy rather than operational details of the four schools.

School Councils

School Councils will now play a more active role in the governance of school affairs. Many reforms are underway and the following are complete:

- A School Council Induction and Orientation pack has been comprehensively redeveloped to provide School Council members with a thorough understanding of the current educational environment, our overall governance structure and school operations.
- We have also upgraded our PMSA portal to enable School Council members easier access to background information on policies, human resources, and communication; School Council minutes, and the new Orientation information. We will continue to increase information flow between School Councils and the rest of the organisation.

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- All School Councils have reduced PMSA Board representation to two members. Somerville House continues to temporarily have three PMSA Board Members until additional independent School Council members are recruited.

Committees

The Audit and Finance Committee's function has been expanded to include governance of financial and non-financial risk. The name has been changed to the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee and the new Charter is now available on the [PMSA website](#).

Corporate Office

We are recalibrating the Corporate Office to provide enhanced services and support to the PMSA Board and our schools and have completed the following:

- Additional executive capabilities are being added to the Corporate Office, including a project manager who is focussed on implementing these governance reforms.
- A Chief Financial Officer / Company Secretary position is currently being externally advertised and managed by a recruitment consultant.
- In 2019, the PMSA Corporate Office will be recruiting a Group Executive – Human Resources and Group Executive – Risk and Governance.
- A new regular meeting group has been established between our Corporate Office and senior staff at each school to identify cost efficiency opportunities across the group.
- We have collaborated with Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) to provide PMSA staff with enhanced annual training on Child Protection.
- Board and School Council members will undergo in-house governance training in 2019 which will add to their current skills and qualifications.

Reporting and transparency

The PMSA is providing a greater level of transparency.

Recent vacancies on School Councils have been advertised within the school community and externally. Further vacancies on School Councils as well as senior PMSA roles will be advertised in early 2019.

Cultural and communication initiatives

The 2018 governance review identified cultural change opportunities. In addition to reforms currently being implemented, we have also embedded cultural transformation in our new Strategic Plan for 2019-2023.

The changes already made – our increased communication with staff and the community, our stronger Corporate Office, and a refreshed PMSA Board with six new Board Members – help illustrate the beginning of our cultural shift.

Our aim is an organisation that is collaborative and high-performing, where positive relationships, trust and transparency flourish. To ensure this evolution is successful, we are planning professionally and addressing issues in earnest.

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Next Steps

Over the next few months, we will be finalising the following changes:

- A new PMSA website with updated governance information including organisation charts, new Committee information, updated By-Laws, updated Charters for School Councils and Committees, policy updates and a new Board skills matrix.
- Updated governance information on school websites including more detailed information about School Council members and their nominations process.
- A template for each school's annual report which will include breakdowns of schools' operational income and expenditure.

We look forward to reporting our progress on these and other changes in mid-March 2019.

More Information

We will continue to provide governance reform updates through the PMSA website, Facebook page and school newsletters.

If you'd like to receive these and other PMSA updates directly to you via email, please sign up on our **PMSA website contact page**. Otherwise for more information, please feel free to contact our Corporate Office team:



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Best wishes for a joyous and safe Christmas.

Kind regards

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