Lutheran Schools Association SA, NT & WA Inc

2015 Executive Director's Report to LSA AGM, 9 May 2016.

Commencing in 2014, Lutheran Education Australia (LEA) undertook a project to develop a leadership and formation framework to describe and inform the work and service of staff in Lutheran learning communities. The outcome *'Growing Deep'* has been launched during February and March of 2016 throughout Australia.

So what is the LEA '*Growing Deep*' leadership and formation framework?



'Growing Deep' is comprised of five interrelated elements – Our Foundation, Vocational Practices, Capabilities, Our Culture and Excellence in Outcomes.

Our Foundation: the Lutheran lens: The foundation of Lutheran education is the gospel of Jesus Christ (which) informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities [*The LCA and its schools, 2001*]. The Lutheran lens identifies key theological concepts that underpin Lutheran education. The lens provides a way of seeing and being in Lutheran education.

Lutheran learning communities, as part of the mission of the Lutheran church, **are** communities -

- of worship and service, sharing and living the good news of Jesus Christ.
- which acknowledge God as creator and join in the ongoing creation and care of the world and all people.
- that recognise that God has intentionally created each person and that each person is uniquely gifted to live in relationship with God and others.
- where grace abounds. While recognising the brokenness of humanity, they reflect the unconditional love of the Father, revealed through the saving work of his Son, Jesus.
- open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who invites and equips for a life of worship, learning and service.
- that value learning as God's gift to people for their wonder, growth, and to inspire them to respond to the needs of the world.
- of hope, nurtured by the promises of God's word, love and forgiveness which empower staff and students to embrace the future with confidence.

Vocational practices: There are five key areas of work or vocational practices that describe what we do in Lutheran education:

- Excellence in learning
- Ongoing improvement and innovation
- Strengthening Lutheran identity
- Community building
- Leading effective organisation and management.

All staff are engaged in each of these vocational practices to varying degrees, at different times, as they live out our service and vocation in Lutheran education.

Capabilities: There are four capabilities, each with four descriptors that describe how staff do what they do in Lutheran education. These leadership capabilities represent an integration of knowledge, skills, personal qualities and understanding. These capabilities assist leaders to identify areas for personal and professional learning.

- **growing oneself:** Building self-awareness | Deepening faith | Learning and adapting | Living positively
- **engaging the community:** Modelling integrity | Listening and understanding | Building support | Networking and strategic relationships
- **leading the team:** Creating purpose and clarity | Nurturing faith | Growing capacity | Inspiring excellence
- **focusing on outcomes:** Searching for knowledge | Sharing for improvement | Thinking strategically | Making it happen.

Our culture: Lutheran education workplace culture describes the atmosphere or climate of the work environment. It is the perception of how it feels to work in Lutheran education, within a particular location, office, learning community or team. It is the environment that is being aspired to create – a culture of fostering educational excellence that is immersed in a Christ-centred approach to education – where all that staff do and say is based on our desire to see every person thrive and flourish in their work and life. Service in response to God's love is at the heart of all that staff do.

Excellence in outcomes: Achieved when the elements of the framework work together in synergy to create excellence.

'Growing Deep' provides a means for all staff in Lutheran learning communities to reflect on their vocation and calling; to delve deeper into why they do what they do; and in turn effect excellence in outcomes for both themselves and the students. It also provides for the LSA a framework for shaping workplace culture and practice within the secretariat and across all learning communities.

The following elements of the 2015 report aim to provide insight into the Lutheran Schools Association and its core functions and service.

1. LSA Governance

LSA Council

The LSA Council and sub committees have continued to provide clear direction to LSA through challenging times. The work of the Finance and Industrial Committees in particular cannot be understated as they confronted some very challenging situations with creativity and optimism.

Council membership 2015

Michael Paech, Principal, St John's Lutheran School, Highgate [Chairperson]; **Dennis Obst**, Governor, Concordia College, Highgate; **Jayne Zadow**, Governor, Crossways Lutheran School, Ceduna; **Michelle Keller**, Teacher, Redeemer, Nuriootpa; **Corrin Townsend** Head of Senior School, Unity College, Murray Bridge; **Lester Saegenschnitter**, Principal, Concordia College, Highgate; **Phil Zanker**, Business Manager, Unity College, Murray Bridge; **Sally Staggs,** Business Manager, St John's Lutheran Schools, Highgate; **Sally Axten**, Indigenous Education Committee; **Julian Bayha**, Pastor, Langmeil Tanunda; **Sue Sullivan,** Principal, Living Waters Lutheran College, Warnbro; **Eunice Stoll**, Principal, Living Waters Lutheran School, Alice Springs; **John Proeve**, Executive Director.

2. LSA staff

The LSA staff team in 2015:

Loyd Fyffe [Deputy Director - completed time of service December 2015]; **Stuart Traeger** [Spiritual Development Leader]; **Tori Weiss** [Education Leader – Christian Studies, 0.8FTE]; **Sue Kupke** [Education Leader- Christian Studies, 0.8FTE]; **Rod Wearn** [Education Leader - Learning Technologies Facilitator]; **Lynette Schiller** [Early Years Learning Facilitator, 0.2FTE]; **Neil Lutz** [Human Resource Manager – completed time of service in 10 Feb 2015]; **Stephen Kroker** [Finance Analyst, 0.4FTE]; **Lindy Yeatman** [Finance Consultant, 0.6FTE]; **Jeff Harman** [Finance Consultant, 0.6FTE]; **Tessa Olesnicky** [Finance Assistant]; **Belinda Soekov-Pearce** [Finance Assistant, 0.4FTE – completed time of service in August 2015]; **Heather Waring** [Executive Assistant, 0.92FTE]; **Phyllis Vosgerau** [Administrative Assistant]; **Gerry Conley** [WHS Consultant, 0.2FTE]

New LSA staff appointments for 2016

Two finance consultant positions (3 year part-time contracts) were offered to Lindy Yeatman and Jeff Harman. These two appointments are enabling the finance team to continue to build on the relationships formed and processes developed with business managers over the past two years. Lindy, also as a part of her role has responsibility for the LSA finances. Jeff also as a part of his role oversees government compliance requirements and BGA applications from member learning communities and related LLL loan applications.

Mignon Weckert, the Educational Leadership Director, commenced in this role on 1 February 2016. Her key responsibilities are to lead the LSA education team and Education Committee; support educational developments, leadership development, learning community improvement and capacity building across the LSA.

Steve Sanders, the Business Performance Director commenced in this role on 29 February 2016. His key responsibilities are to lead the LSA finance team, administration team, work place culture and practice initiatives and new learning community developments. Steve will oversee learning community improvement processes in workplace culture, governance and policy development, and business enterprise across the LSA.

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3. Enrolments – LSA Learning Communities 2014/2015

	SA 2014	SA 2015	NT 2014	NT 2015	WA 2014	WA 2015	LSA 2014	LSA 2015
Primary	7,492	7,538	904	935	777	635	9173	9,108
Secondary	4,875	4,987	856	911	454	577	6,196	6,475
Total	**12,367**	**12,525**	**1,760**	**1,846**	**1,231**	**1,212**	**15,369**	**15,583**
Pre Kindy /Kindy	377	387	0	0	72	60	437	447
ELC	139	127	10	16	0	0	149	143

4. Leadership

4.1 Changes in leadership in LSA WA: 2015 - March 2016

Robert Sellars, Interim Principal (2015), Living Waters, Halls Head Campus, WA.
Caroline Hayes – Head of School, Living Waters, Halls Head (appointment for 2016)

4.2 Change in leadership in LSA NT: 2015 - March 2016

Rachel Boyce, Principal of Good Shepherd Lutheran College, Darwin (from commencement of 2015)

4.3 Changes in leadership in LSA SA: - 2015

Julian Denholm (Principal Unity College, Murray Bridge, from Good Shepherd Lutheran College, NT)
Francois Pienaar (Principal Crossways Lutheran School, Ceduna, from Navigator College, Pt Lincoln)
Andrew Kelly (Principal Redeemer Lutheran School, Nuriootpa, from Living Waters Halls Head, Mandurah)
Steven Wilksch (Principal Faith Lutheran College, Tanunda, from Redeemer Lutheran School, Nuriootpa)
Colin Minke (Principal Immanuel Lutheran College, Buderim Qld, from Tatachilla Lutheran College)
Cain McDonald (Principal Tatachilla Lutheran College, from Victory Lutheran College, Wodonga Vic)

Changes in leadership in LSA SA: - 2016

Tania Fragnito (Director Calvary Lutheran Kindergarten, Morphett Vale)
Terri Taylor (Principal St Michael's Lutheran School, Hahndorf)
Daryl Trigg (Principal Immanuel Lutheran School, Gawler from Golden Grove Lutheran School)
Michael Emmett (Principal Lobethal Lutheran School from St John's Lutheran School, Portland Vic)
Michelle Keller (Principal Vineyard Lutheran School Clare)
Shane Paterson (Principal Golden Grove Lutheran School from March 29 2016 from LEA Assistant Director: Leadership)

Following the appointment of **Kaye Mathwin-Cox** to LEA Director of Research Development from Term 2, 2016, **Neville Grieger** has been appointed to the principal position at Navigator College, Pt Lincoln for the remainder of 2016 and 2017.

5. Training and support programs

5.1 Pathways (staff formation program)

LSA has continued working with individual learning communities in monitoring the delivery of Spiritual and Theological Pathways at the local level. Principals, learning community pastors and the LSA Spiritual and Cultural Development Leader, Stuart Traeger have taken an active role in the facilitation of these two modules. The support of pastors in the delivery of Theological Pathways is acknowledged and immensely appreciated. The Vocational Pathways continues to be provided on a regional or cluster learning community basis by LSA staff.

Once again it has been observed that learning communities that have been intentional in delivering Pathways Spiritual as a part of new staff induction have demonstrated best success in the timely delivery of Pathways. Conversely, learning communities that have not adopted a structured approach to the delivery of Pathways may have found themselves in a situation where staff, new to Lutheran education, have not fulfilled the accreditation requirements within the prescribed three-year period (as per the LSA EAs) upon appointment.

Pathways together with '*Growing Deep',* which is applicable to all staff in Lutheran learning communities, are crucial to the formation of staff in Lutheran learning communities.

5.2 Equip

The LSA staff through its education leaders continue to provide Equip workshops for teachers and leaders across LSA. These workshops were provided at the LSA office and also at individual learning community sites. To better provide timely access to some Equip modules, online delivery was again provided to participants across multiple sites.

Feedback from Equip modules continues to be positive; participants are energised and appreciate the support and learning from Equip for Christian Studies but also for other learning areas (in regards to pedagogy).

5.3 Pedagogy

The education team provided on request a range of pedagogy and practice support to learning communities. This support was interwoven around the lens of Christian Studies and often incorporated Learning Technologies. The LSA education team focus is on developmental and sustainable improvement initiatives, not 'one-off' programs that have minimal long-term impact on pedagogy and practice.

5.4 Spiritual leadership – facilitated by Stuart Traeger (Spiritual and Cultural Development Leader)

A variety of options for spiritual reflection and growth have been provided to whole learning communities, leaders, including principals, directors, sub-school heads, deputy principals and business managers. The modality of delivery of spiritual reflection and growth options is contextualised to the audience and the desired outcomes. A number of learning communities have built into their yearly program a 'spiritual retreat' (up to a day or longer) where for all staff there is opportunity to delve deeper into personal spiritual growth and formation.

An option of an extended spiritual retreat encompassing Central Australia is under development. Such an experience could be accessed by principals as part of their 'sabbatical' program. Into the future there is potential scope to further leverage the Lutheran Principals Association's intention around supporting principal well-being through the development of a suite of sabbatical opportunities and experiences.

5.5 Supporting learning community ministry personnel

As part of its support to those involved with ministry responsibilities within learning communities, LSA facilitates network meetings once a term for secondary learning community pastors/chaplains, worship leaders and primary learning community chaplains. A retreat experience provided for pastors and chaplains is valued and appreciated.

5.6 Valuing Safe Communities (VSC)

The ongoing training of facilitators and staff was programed throughout the year. Each learning community should now have an accredited VSC facilitator. It is the responsibility of the principal/director of each learning community to ensure that all staff maintain currency of their VSC certification.

5.7 Governance of learning communities

A significant focus in 2015 was the finalisation of constitutional review around three key categories of governance:

- Learning community operated by a Board
- Learning community operated by a Congregation
- Learning community operated by a supporting Congregation (Association).

A five-year review schedule has been developed to ensure that all learning communities undertake a regular review of their constitution. In 2016 the focus group will be Kindergartens and Child Care Centres.
Site specific governance workshops continue to be presented to learning community councils or boards to better equip them for their important governance roles and functions.

The LCA and LEA are presently engaged in an extensive review of their governance structures. This also incorporates a review of regional governance structures. Regional consultations have been scheduled as a part of this process and I encourage LSA principals and learning community governance representatives to participate in these.

5.8 Working with and supporting learning communities in a competitive educational environment
The plight of learning communities with enrolment pressures continues to demand significant attention. Critical to the ongoing sustainability of all learning communities is the quality of their educational programs. The combined efforts of LSA staff and learning community leadership and governance have enabled a number of learning communities to implement strategies to strengthen the quality of education provided. This will continue to be an intentional focus of the LSA secretariat into the future.

5.9 Learning community improvement
During 2015 a number of LSA learning communities participated in various learning community improvement initiatives offered through the Association of Independent Schools. Learning community leaders were supported with engagement in the analysis and interpretation of the data, and development of 'action plans'. Much of the focus was around the development of pedagogical and curriculum frameworks in response to the introduction of the Australian curriculum. In some instances, this extended into the development of new strategic plans.

In 2016 all LEA learning communities will undertake an LEA learning community improvement survey, 'Quality Schools' (QS) developed to reflect the Lutheran education context. The QS survey has been developed to in part reflect the 'vocational practices' of 'Growing Deep'. This new instrument will gather feedback from staff, students and parents. It is envisaged that this will provide contextual feedback to each learning community, which in turn will enable learning communities to be more agile in their response to the feedback.

5.10 Financial sustainability of learning communities
All of the Australian non-government education sector continues to be impacted by the fiscal situation across the country. Families make decisions around their priorities for discretionary spending; financial pressures directly impact on parent choice of education and ultimately enrolments of students in the non-government sector. The pressure that this continues to place on our principals and governance cannot be overstated as those communities that have experienced a decline in enrolment have necessarily had to go through staff redundancy processes. Whilst this was not desirable it was prudent management of each site.

It is recognised and accepted that in these tough financial times there needs to be concentrated focus on education delivery, coupled with targeted marketing and community promotion to enable each learning community to flourish within their local educational setting.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge and thank the LSA finance committee for their commitment to overseeing the financial management of the LSA and its member learning communities and their resolve to ensure the viability and sustainability of the LSA and its learning communities. Likewise, the

continuing support of the LSA finance team to business managers, principals and in turn, the finance committees of a significant number of learning communities is acknowledged and appreciated.

6. Industrial landscape

Providing fair employment conditions for all employees of learning communities is a mandate and something that is taken seriously. Hence the LSA has made the intentional shift towards greater emphasis around 'workplace culture and practice'. The continuing challenge is to find the balance between workload, welfare and well-being and remuneration within the economic viability and sustainability of all learning communities. This is a tension and challenge for the LSA Enterprise Bargaining negotiators. 2015 was a busy year with South Australia and Western Australia Enterprise Agreements being negotiated with employers and employee representative groups and the subsequent formal approval of the respective collective enterprise agreements by the Fair Work Commission.

7. Specific strategies to ensure a flourishing culture and practice prevails across LSA Learning Communities.

Coming out of the feedback from the principals' forum in October 2015 five key drivers to ensuring a flourishing culture and practice prevails across LSA Learning Communities were identified. These are being built into the LSA Strategic Plan 2016-2017.

7.1. Governance training

Whilst this has generally been undertaken on single site basis, the intention is to provide such training also around a school cluster focus, thereby providing opportunity for not only training but networking across councils and boards.

It is also the intention to provide biennial chairs and principals governance training around aspects specific to the governance of Lutheran Learning Communities.

7.2. Our Identity individually and collectively

'*Growing Deep'* leadership and formation framework provides a resource for leaders to explore:

- Who we are? (Faith informed)
- Whose we are?
- To whom we are called to serve?

In having a clearer understanding of our individual identity we in turn should be better able to reflect on that which all our learning communities have in common.

7.3. Leadership development

Various options are presently being explored to enable the LSA to be more intentional in providing further development and growth of its present principals and senior leaders. This will be distinct from the LEA Leadership Development Program (LDP) which focuses on formational and technical aspects of leadership. 'Growing Deep' will inform the development of this process.

7.4. A renewed approach to principal appraisal

The LEA National Leadership Team are presently investigating 'principal review' processes. This will assist the regions, including LSA, in working with principals in shaping the future direction of review processes. It is envisaged that this will happen during 2016, with the intention of the implementation of a new approach from late 2016 into 2017.

7.5. Open engagement in shaping LSA's future culture and practice

Opportunities for reflection and input from the LSA membership are welcomed and will be built into regular forums and feedback processes.

8. Learning community developments

8.1. Amalgamation of learning communities

Concordia College and St John's Primary Highgate: Effective from 1 January 2016 Concordia College and St John's Lutheran Primary School amalgamated and are now known as Concordia College, Concordia campus and Concordia College, St John's campus.

8.2. Future education provision in the greater Mt Barker region – Adelaide Hills

A working group investigated options for the use of donated land for the purpose of furthering Lutheran education in the Adelaide Hills. An external feasibility study has been commissioned and a report with recommendations is imminent at the time of writing this report. It is anticipated that recommendations will be presented to the LSA Council in July 2016.

8.3. Two Wells

The Hickinbotham Group are partnering with LSA in the development of a birth to year 12 Lutheran College in the planned residential development at Two Wells. A working group will soon be established to commence the planning process. The anticipated start date will be in 2019.

8.4. Roseworthy

The State Government has approved the plans for residential development of Roseworthy which will increase the population by 10,000 over the next 20 years. The LSA has been gifted land at the gateway to this development for use for a learning community. A working group will be formed in the near future to commence planning for this new learning community.

8.5. Endeavour College - Year 7 enrolments from commencement of 2016

From the commencement of 2016 the Lutheran primary learning communities in the Northern Adelaide area, St Paul Blair Athol, Golden Grove and Good Shepherd Para Vista, restructured to provide reception (foundation) to year 6 education. At this time the first intake of year 7 enrolments commenced at Endeavour College.

9. LSA Strategic Intentions 2015 - see Attachment 1

10. Working together in partnership

LSA is blessed to have leaders who have a servant heart and a commitment to the ethos of Lutheran education. On behalf of all LSA Learning Communities I commend all principals, directors and other senior leaders for the leadership they provided to their respective learning communities throughout 2015. The role of a leader in an educational setting is increasingly more complex and challenging. We honour and thank all our leaders most sincerely for everything they do by way of their leadership and service to Lutheran education.

The LSA gratefully acknowledges and gives praise and thanks to God for the dedicated learning community councils/boards of the LSA SA & NT, for the commitment that they have to the mission of the Church and for the way in which they have supported their respective learning community leadership and in turn, staff, students and families.

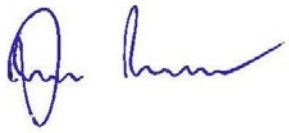
We also acknowledge and thank the pastors and lay personnel who have pastorally supported the principals/directors and staff teams of our learning communities. It is recognised that pastoral

vacancies, as experienced during the past year, place additional pressures on the respective learning communities and church communities.
The LSA is immensely grateful for the very cordial relationship it has with the LCA SA/NT District, and LCA WA District and Bishops David Altus, Greg Pfeiffer and the respective District staff teams.

11. Special Acknowledgements

I sincerely thank Michael Paech, Denis Obst and Michelle Keller who finished their time of service on the LSA council at the conclusion of 2015. Their commitment to the vision and mission of the LSA and passion towards furthering the mission and ministry of the church through its learning communities has been instrumental in shaping the direction of the LSA. In particular, I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to Michael Paech for his support of me and his counsel and wisdom shared. Michael served as LSA Council Chair for 10 years. Over this time, he oversaw many changes and was always a strong advocate for the LSA in some challenging and difficult situations. The LSA is indebted to Michael for the time and personal sacrifices made to ensure that the LSA was well led and respected.
Loyd Fyffe left the LSA fold in December 2015 after serving in Lutheran education for 38 years. Since his appointment as Deputy Director of the LSA in December 2008, Loyd provided valuable leadership, management and support of child care centres, early learning centres, kindergartens, primary and secondary Lutheran schools operating within South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia. A significant aspect of his work in recent years was the development of leadership in learning communities through his commitment to the Leadership Development Program.
Loyd's professionalism, sound judgement and wisdom, as well as his valued ability to build warm and sincere relationships was immensely valued. His servant heart and sincerity have left an indelible mark on those with whom he worked over a very distinguished career in Lutheran education. He will be truly missed by the LSA staff team and the broader LSA and LEA communities.
The LSA staff team are truly amazing. They first have to put up with me but then also at times absorb wrath from external sources and yet they still display calm and graciousness. I thank and commend them on their outstanding work throughout 2015. They have taken on new challenges and have been responsive to operating in increasingly collaborative ways to effect great team outcomes.

Working together in Christ



John Proeve
LSA Executive Director

Attachment 1

LSA Strategic Plan 2015

Core Function	For our Governing Bodies (LEA, LCA, Government authorities etc)	For our Learning Communities (LCs)	For the LSA Staff Team
Identity • Who we are • Whose we are • To whom we're called to serve.	To grow and enhance clearly our relationships with, and our responsibilities to, our partners and statutory bodies in education.	To refresh the LSA brand to build clarity and confidence across the region. To clearly articulate the type and parameters of service which the LSA team can deliver to Learning Communities.	To build a LSA staff and secretariat structure (with clear roles) aligned to delivery of LSA's strategic plan.
Education	To improve the quality of education within a Lutheran context.	To extend the understanding of our Learning Communities of the Lutheran context and how it applies to education.	
Leadership Development & Succession Planning		To drive Learning Community independence by developing leadership capacity, capability & confidence. To support a culture in which all cluster Learning Communities collaborate to ensure each is sustainable and thriving while respecting their unique points of difference.	
Governance, Finance & Risk Management	To provide support to all Learning Communities to fulfil their regulatory obligations with regard to financial, industrial, WHS and other matters.	To secure the sustainability of the LSA Region as a whole by developing consistent systems, processes and templates for use in each Learning Community and by building financial and business risk management acumen among Learning Community leaders.	