



COMMUNITY REPORT

2020

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BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

I have served on the CREST Board for a number of years, most recently serving as Board Chair since May 2019, and during this time I have been given greater insight into the heart and soul of our CREST community. Despite the immense challenges posed by the COVID pandemic, I believe the CREST community has been greatly blessed throughout 2020 and our strong position at year end is a testament to the faithfulness of God. From the Board level down, this year has demonstrated our commitment to the CREST vision, to be a leading provider of quality Christian education.

Over the year all our decisions and efforts were focused on how we could best support our students, parents and staff during a year of significant uncertainty, as our community faces significant anxiety in the areas of health, finances and community connections.

As our Board reflects on the successful handling of operational challenges during COVID, as well as the growth and development achieved, we acknowledge the tremendous work of the staff throughout our organisation under the able leadership of our Executive Principal, Mr Brendan Kelly. I have appreciated the

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tireless efforts of the senior leadership across the entire Crest precinct. I would also particularly like to thank my fellow Board members, whose work is immensely important as part of the ongoing unfolding of our wonderful school community.

Mrs Melinda Izvekov - Crest Board Chair

EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL'S STATEMENT

2020 will long remain in the memory of all who have lived through this most extraordinary of years, and the great challenges faced by communities around the world have been difficult to witness. For schools, the pandemic has brought unique changes that have challenged the long-established norms of western education systems, yet also reminded us of the unchangeable necessities of schools in the community. The response of CREST Education throughout 2020 reflects both the strength of our foundations as a Christian school of timeless values and beliefs, and our ability to be progressive and agile in the methods, by which this Christian education is delivered.

It is of great reassurance therefore that CREST Education has

emerged from 2020 in stronger shape than when we began. Our enrolments are strong, our academic successes are excellent, our financial position is very sound, our facilities continue to develop, we have a strong and united staff team that is well supported by an engaged parent community and a highly motivated Board of Directors.

We have emerged through the difficulties of this year in such strong health, is a cause for celebration. While we know that the unpredictability of our times suggest we must never become complacent, nonetheless our progress through 2020 should serve to remind us of the commitment of all in CREST to our continued mission and reassure us about the future of our organisation.

2020 highlights include:

- Our students achieving excellent results in both VCE and VCAL.
- The continued growth of our Colleges, with total enrolments now numbering over 2000 students.
- The rapid progress towards International Baccalaureate authorisation in both the MYP and IB Diploma programmes.
- The willingness of our teachers to make rapid and significant adjustments to their pedagogy, and the strength of our services team in ensuring such outstanding operational performance throughout the year.
- The establishment of the CREST Institute as a centre for Christian educational research in partnership with Christian Schools Australia.
- The strong sense of belonging and parental support in both of our college communities.
- Specific wellbeing initiatives such as the introduction of a CREST Student Psychologist and the online resource of SchoolTV.
- The completion of wonderful new buildings, and the promise of further developments at both the Rivercrest and Hillcrest campuses, including a new STEM Centre at Rivercrest.
- vocational/RTO growth and cross-campus learning alignment and optimisation.
- Learning – Co-curricular; including sports, outdoor education and performing arts.
- Our Christian Character of worship, chaplaincy, Christian Education, service, and outreach.
- Staff Development in terms of pedagogy, Christian Education, and leading best practice.
- The Environment; including sustainability and our environmental, agricultural, and horticultural facilities.
- Student Pathway Structures to guide our students and provide character and competency development.
- Further refining our Masterplan regarding facilities for learning, sport, environment, community, performing arts, ICT/ infrastructure, and utilities.
- Wellbeing Services such as psychology, health services, student tracking, referrals and outside agencies and family support.
- Crest Advancement practices of enrolments, marketing and communication, alumni, philanthropy and strategic and community/Church partnerships.

By the end of 2021, it is expected that we will have completed a new Strategic Plan for CREST Education. This plan will be the anchor on which we base our programmes for the next five years in our CREST Colleges, the CREST Institute and our CREST Shared Services – intending to create the engine for driving systematic and sustainable improvement.

This will see a focus across our entire organisation on achieving excellence and consistency across CREST in areas such as:

- Learning – Curricular; including academic excellence,

While there will always be challenges for a large educational organisation such as ours, we are making significant progress towards becoming a genuinely future focussed learning community. We have made big strides towards fulfilling our potential as an organisation, and we remain most thankful for the many blessings that God has showered upon us. There is much to do in 2021, and this excites all involved in this wonderful family that is CREST Education. We have the enormous privilege of being God's people in this place, and we know that the best is yet to come.

Mr Brendan Kelly – Executive Principal

RESEARCH & INNOVATION

In late January of 2020, our staff commenced the school year by participating in a day of professional learning focused on strategies for building relationships and connections with students. Somewhat ironically, eight weeks later we commenced what turned out to be an extended period of remote learning making 'connection' all the more important, and yet all the more difficult.

Early in Term 1, the CREST Strategic Learning Team was convened. This team is made up of key educational leaders from across Hillcrest and Rivercrest. The main goal in establishing this cross-campus team was to work together to ensure best teaching and learning practice across CREST and to implement designated initiatives and projects arising from the CREST strategic priorities. Very quickly, however, this team became pivotal in responding to COVID-19 restrictions by working together to prepare for and facilitate online learning across both Colleges. This involved the development of policies, protocols, staff training, information guides for parents and the setting up of online resources. Importantly, a phased strategy for online learning, taking into account issues such as synchronous and asynchronous approaches,

use of project-based learning, changes to assessment, consideration of staff workload and student wellbeing had to be developed – all within extremely tight timelines. As the year progressed, we then had to gather and respond to feedback from students, parents and staff and continually modify practices in order to ensure the best outcomes. Of course, there was then significant work to do in preparing for a return to onsite learning, being sensitive to the needs of our community whilst at the same time keeping up with government directives.

Whilst a great number of our original plans had to be put aside in 2020, in many respects, the circumstances required us to do a few years' worth of innovation within a very short period of time. Furthermore, the creative thinking, high levels of collaboration, resilience, flexibility and fresh approaches have now opened the door to a whole range of new possibilities which we are continuing to explore and embed.

Dr Maria Varlet – Head of Research & Innovation

HEAD OF COLLEGE RIVERCREST

THE THEME FOR RIVERCREST IN 2020 WAS 'A YEAR TO HOPE'.

Rivercrest Christian College's Year to Hope, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, was characterized by innovation and a commitment to upholding the wellbeing of the learning community. Responding to the challenge of rapidly redeveloping systems and processes to accommodate significant periods of online learning, the College leveraged its already robust online learning systems of CREST Connect, Managebac and Seesaw, and introduced a range of new technologies such as Zoom and MS Teams to facilitate connection and collaboration. Pastoral phone calls, care packages, click and collect Library systems, and a whole host of new initiatives were developed in partnership with families during this challenging year.

Curriculum

Learning and teaching flipped significantly during lockdowns, with students engaging in a mixture of asynchronous and synchronous experiences, which reflected our ongoing commitment to an inquiry-based, concept-driven and collaborative pedagogical approach.

In the Primary Years, the agility of our staff and students was powerfully expressed through the virtual PYP Exhibition experience. Students used video conferencing to collaborate while working remotely, making use of Google Apps for Education to collaborate in research and investigations online. To share the outcome of their inquiries, students designed websites which featured video presentations, interactive slide decks and surveys to assess participant feedback. On the Exhibition launch night, each Year 5 group facilitated their own Zoom meeting, showcasing their learning for participants based on the websites they designed. This singular experience exemplified the creativity, innovation and agility of learning and teaching in the Primary Years.

Following on from the successful opening of the Middle Years campus, our first Year 7 (MY2) stream comprising of two classes was welcomed. Joining our growing team of teaching staff was Joseph Lewzcuk,

Craig Jacobs, Nicole Patsika and Kerri Weidemann. Fiona Porter also began in the role of part time Learning Support Teacher in Semester 2, and we welcomed the appointment of our first Head of Secondary during Term 4, Mr Peter Bruce.

The Middle Years team were able to effectively pivot during the COVID-19 lockdown periods by providing students with a range of online learning experiences. These experiences included maintaining a quality IB curriculum which presented learning opportunities in a global context. A statement of inquiry was provided for each unit and assessed against the Victorian Curriculum within an IB framework. Staff were able to maintain a personal connection with students and student well-being remained at the forefront of all learning opportunities.

College Operations

The reimagining of many College events and experiences took place in 2020, with the majority of these shifting to a virtual or remote mode, such as the virtual Presentation Service and the Zoom-based Parent Information Evening. Transition and orientation programmes also had to be adapted to meet COVID-safe requirements, with teachers connecting with new students via Zoom, and welcoming small groups of students for transition tours in accordance with physical-distancing and gathering restrictions.

2020 NAPLAN – suspended due to COVID-19

As the annual NAPLAN testing schedule did not take place in 2020, RCC sought to undertake alternative testing platforms to capture a snapshot of student learning growth. PAT testing was used in Term 4 to establish a baseline measurement of literacy and numeracy which informed our staff in regard to specific targeted intervention. Students requiring extension were given the opportunity to undertake ICAS testing which is a well-respected global initiative endorsed by the University of New South Wales.

In the midst of 2020, significant capital works continued to be progressed as part of the Rivercrest masterplan. These works included the completion of the Middle Years building extension, adding an additional four classrooms and breakout spaces, and enhancement of outdoor gathering areas for students.



In the Primary Years, the upgrade of Ferdinand Drive as the main entrance road for Rivercrest was completed by Casey City Council, accompanied by the construction of a new fence-line to improve safety and security of the College. Construction of Stage 6 of the Primary Campus commenced, with the completion of the first wing of the new Year 2/3 building to be completed by January 2021.

Spiritual Growth

In a year of challenging circumstances, we were blessed to be able to provide Chapel services for our students during our online learning that was supported by our Chaplaincy team and our amazing teaching staff. Upon return to campus in Term 4, our students were able to be involved in leading our Chapel services with the support and guidance from Chaplain Sam Farmilo, Chaplain Dan McNeil and our College leadership team. Students were given voice and agency in the development of Chapel services in order for our students to learn more about God's word and encourage them to serve others.

Wellbeing

We were also excited to welcome Nicola Farrell to the CREST family in the role of Psychologist as an integral part of the Wellbeing team. Nicola brings a depth of experience and is seeking to further develop effective processes to support the young people within our care.

Ms Christine Lucas - Head of College





HEAD OF COLLEGE HILLCREST



Many of our students in 2020 attended onsite for less than half of the school year. This unprecedented challenge required staff to re-imagine education and to make significant curriculum changes at very short notice.

Furthermore, VCAA required Study Design changes to VCE courses and new processes to authentication School Assessed Course work online. Wellbeing of both staff and students was a primary focus during the year as was parent partnership in student learning. We saw an increased degree of commitment and partnership between staff and families.

In our Year of Creativity, we saw teachers and families respond in new and innovative ways to the challenge of transitioning to online learning. We participated in an ongoing process of improvement as we collaborated closely across the organisation and implemented timely responses to feedback from our parents and learners.

Faith

Online learning presented new challenges for the provision of faith support and services. Our three full-time Chaplains provided strong support to students identified as needing additional care and assistance with calls through Teams, and additional connections with Pastoral teachers. Chaplains were involved in individual follow ups and delivery of care and encouragement packages to our students who were struggling with the isolation from their peers. The creation and provision of online Chapels and Assemblies proved a powerful way to keep connections around faith and community occurring.

Character (including Wellbeing)

The ongoing lockdown required a re-imagining of Year 12 events, especially at the end of the year for the Final Assembly and Valedictory Dinner. These events required substantial changes to be compliant with COVID19 restrictions and at the same time were a fitting celebration of our Year 12s final year. A great number of parents took the opportunity to record a message of support played during the Final Assembly.

Teachers designed and implemented a range of reflective tasks where students could be acknowledged for learning outside of their formal studies. These tasks led to rich learning conversations between students, teachers, and parents.

Wellbeing was delivered remotely through connecting existing structures and developing new structures within Secondary. This resulted in a new approach to how student incidents are handled that is timely and student focused.

Learning

College staff undertook a range of innovative, evidence based and responsive practices to assist students to engage with learning. The range of learning activities and strategies included:

- Development of Day at a Glance/Week at a Glance organisers to support families with the planning and transition at home associated with Online Learning;
- Establishment and maintenance of the Optional Challenge Zone to provide ongoing, fresh opportunities for learners to extend themselves;
- Ongoing provision of learning support programs to cater for the needs of vulnerable learners: Speech Therapy, Phonological Awareness Groups, Sounds Write Groups;
- Institution of regular support sessions in English and Mathematics across Years 3-6
- Introduction of team teaching and maintenance of high levels of collaborative planning.
- Implementation of MS Teams to deliver an online synchronous platform for class teaching.
- Greater use of teaching strategies such as flipped learning/screen casting to deliver direct instruction asynchronously.
- Modification of the timetable to include shorter lesson times (7-10) and

2020

In the Year of Creativity, the year brought online learning to the forefront with two sustained lockdowns for COVID19.



wellbeing time to decrease the intensity and immediacy of online learning; one of the particular concerns was the amount of screen-time students were having to engage in.

- Curriculum changes - moving to more project based learning, less reliance on tests due to authentication issues and greater focus on essential curriculum outcomes.
- Online authentication for School Assessed Course work which, due to quick implementation, led to our students being less pressured to complete assessments once they returned to onsite learning.
- Planning of curriculum initiatives such as a new reading program to improve literacy outcomes in our 7-9 students and the removal of the Maths Pathways program for a more readiness-based approach to mathematical learning.

Staff continued to engage in Professional Learning, particularly with the increase in technology skills across the learning community required for teachers, learners and families. Additionally, there was increased collaboration across Hillcrest and Rivercrest Christian Colleges to maximize the learning potential of CREST Connect.

One obvious outcome from the online learning was increased student and parent voice in reflecting upon

growth and in the reporting process.

Staff showed agility in responding quickly to student and parent feedback to develop our online learning procedures and timetabling. There was also an emphasis on teacher collaboration to develop and implement curriculum modifications, and development of a centralised collection of learning adjustments for NCCD reporting and tracking of learning needs.

Service & Character

Staff prepared Prep to Year 2 Craft Packs to support creativity and share joy. All staff were involved in regular phone calls to check-in with families, consolidate partnership and provide support. Learning Conferences were held online and proved a preferred way of engaging for some families.

One of the many highlights of the year was the provision of performance opportunities through a combined Primary and Rivercrest Christian College virtual choir.

Property

The Visual Arts/STEM area including the VEX robotics build area was completed as well as the 3D print room. New equipment purchased for the 3D print room was purchased including more 3D printers (to extend the print options for students) and a laser cutter. This will facilitate the development of new STEM curriculum that will be cross curricular, project/problem based and focus on solving real world problems.

Ms Christine Lucas – Head of College



VCE RESULTS & TERTIARY PLACEMENTS

Despite having a difficult and challenging year due to COVID19, VCE results were the strongest since 2014.

There were many top performers in 2020, with the highest ATAR being 97.7. The top three students achieved ATAR scores of 97.7, 97.6 and 95.1. Of the 90 students who received an ATAR, 4 gained an ATAR of 90 or above, placing them in the top 10% of the state.

- 4 students (or 6.9%) received ATAR scores over 90.
- 18 received ATAR scores over 80 (26.5%)
- 32 received ATAR scores over 70 (47.1%)
- No students received an ATAR lower than 40.

Nearly half (47.1 %) of our students attained a ATAR score above 70. The average ATAR was 67.9. The median study score was 30, with the average study score at 30.2. This was a distinct improvement on 2019 results, with a median study score of 29. Furthermore, it is an improvement when compared to the last five years, with the middle band of students (ATAR scores 40-50, 70-80 and 80-90) increasing as a percentage of the total number of students.

For VCAL, 2020 was the first year that the College offered the Senior VCAL certificate. All of the students completed their school course work (Strands: Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Development Skills and Work Related Skills). One student is yet to complete their VET credits. Hence, 11 out of 12 students finished their Senior VCAL certificate for 2020.

Tertiary Placements

The majority (84%) of our Year 12 students applied for tertiary placements through VTAC. Of these students, 95% were offered places. Those who did not apply have entered the

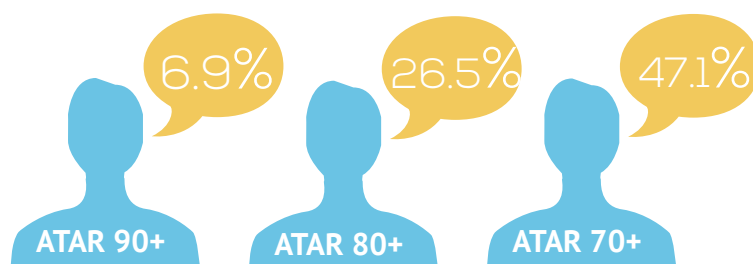
workforce, moved interstate, undertaken traineeships or chosen to study elsewhere. Year 12 students of 20120 have been successful in gaining places to Tertiary institutions including, Australian National University (3.75%), Australian Catholic University (7.5%) Deakin University (12.5%), Federation University of Australia (10%), La Trobe University (1.25%), Monash University (17.5%), RMIT University (17.5%), Swinburne University of Technology (11.25%) and University of Melbourne (3.75%).

Students have obtained places in the following courses:

Allied Health Assistance, Architecture, Arts, Arts/International Relations, Arts/Laws, Psychological Science and Criminology, Business, Commerce, Communication Design (Honours), Community Development, Criminology and Psychology, Education Studies, Engineering (Honours), Film, Television and Animation, Health Sciences, Information Technology, Interior Design, International Business/ Business, International Business/ Arts, Justice (Diploma), Law, Management, Marketing (Psychology), Media and Communication/Business, Midwifery, Music Performance, Nursing, Physiotherapy (Honours), Psychological Science, Psychological Sciences/ Criminal Justice and Criminology, Psychology (Honours), Radiation Sciences, Science, Science/Arts, Science/Teaching(Secondary), Sport Development, Sport Science (Human Movement)/Sport Management, Sport, Physical and Outdoor Education, Veterinary and Wildlife Science.

Dux & Proxime Accessit

Congratulations to Rachel Turner who was named Dux of the College for 2020. Rachel has been offered a place at Monash University to study Physiotherapy (Honours). A new award was introduced this year for the runner up to the Dux, Proxime Accessit, this was awarded to Himesh Jayasekera who has been offered a place at the University of Melbourne to study Commerce.



ATTENDANCE FIGURES

Attendance rates have traditionally been very strong. The Crest Colleges use the Synergetic Student Management System for attendance monitoring. Attendance is formally collected twice a day (am/pm) and there is an expectation that teachers keep a record of attendance in each of their classes. Absence lists are generated and sent to all appropriate staff.

The parent or guardian of any student who is absent without appropriate reason or notice are contacted by the College on that day. If attendance is becoming problematic, systems are in place to ensure parents are informed of the situation and that procedures are in place to remedy or alleviate the situation.

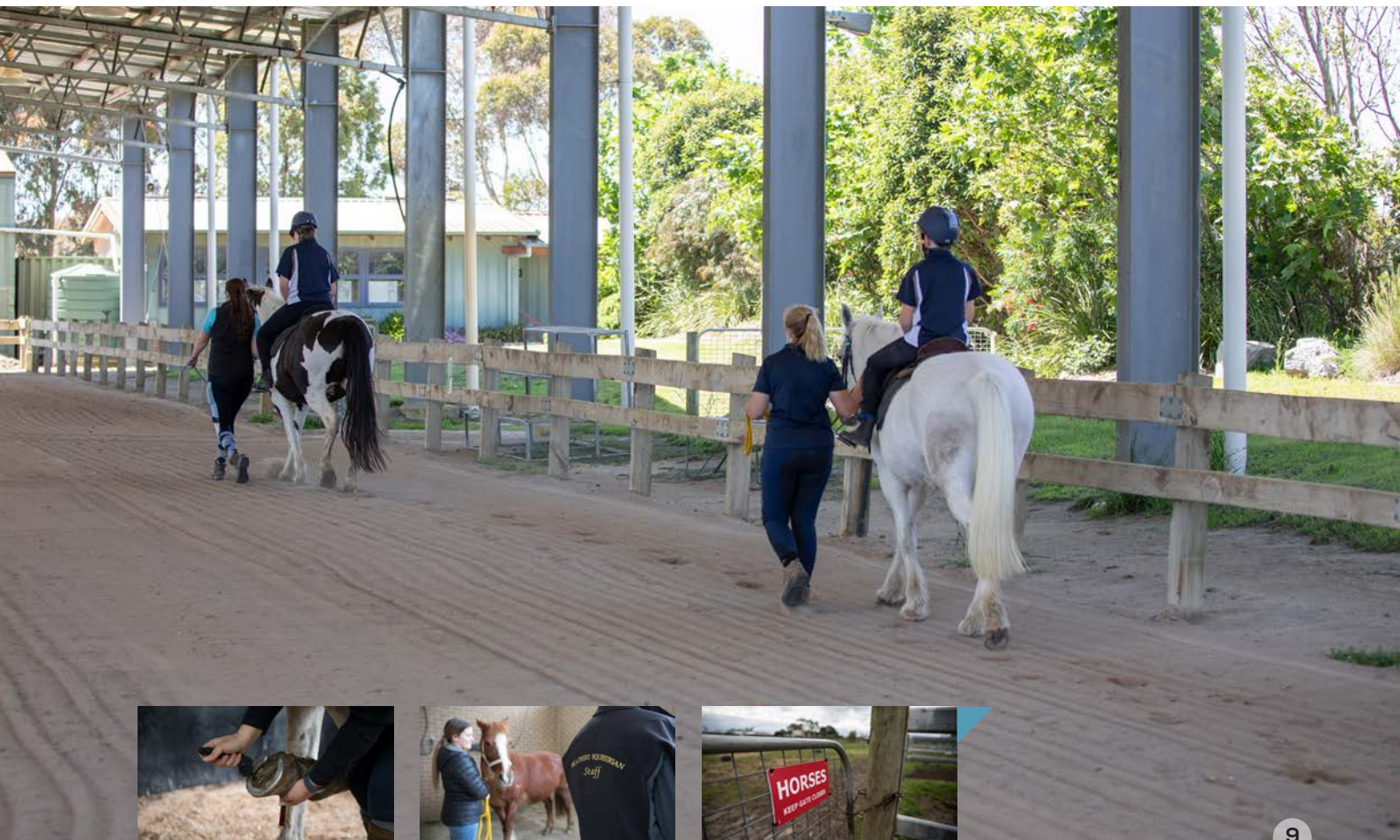
Year Level	Attendance Rate %
Prep	93.44
1	92.50
2	94.65
3	94.54
4	94.10
5	95.11
6	95.31
7	94.81
8	93.77
9	94.92
10	93.92
11	95.41
12	90.71
Total	94.09

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
Prep	90.87
1	92.15
2	92.46
3	92.35
4	94.56
5	94.62
6	91.69
7	95.24
Total	92.99

RIVERCREST

HILLCREST

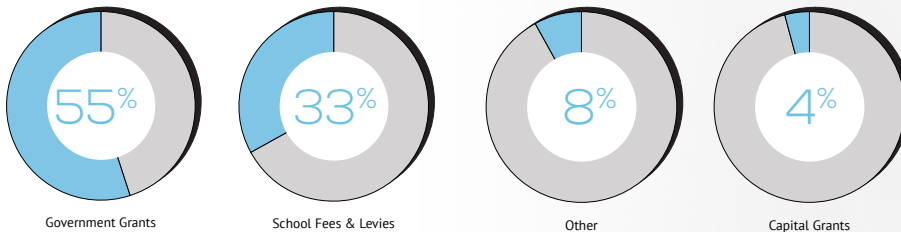
AYR HILL EQUESTRIAN CENTRE



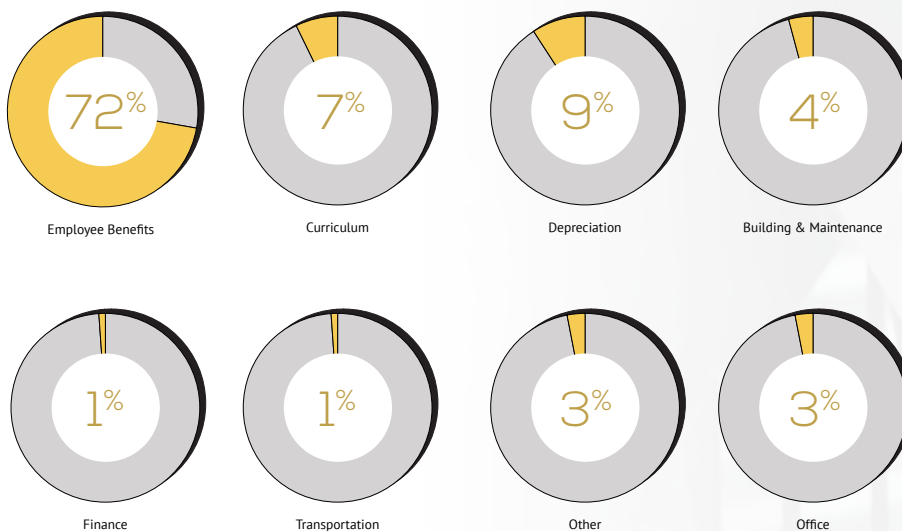
FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT

CREST Education is a not-for-profit organisation, and we adhere to contemporary commercial business and governance practices to ensure that finances are managed in an effective and efficient manner. All end-of-year surpluses are applied to facility development and/or repayment of borrowings. Crest has also been successful in maintaining school fees at an affordable level that are amongst the lowest in this area. The major sources of income and expenditure for 2020 were:

income sources



expenditure focus



CREST Education continues to invest significantly in facilities and infrastructure to meet the growing needs of our dynamic school communities. Rivercrest continues to be the main focus of committed Capex spend, particularly with the ongoing development of its Senior campus, whilst the Board is also committing funds so that Hillcrest can improve and add to its excellent facility offerings. Whilst COVID did slow some projects down it did not negatively impact key projects.

Rivercrest Developments

The extension to our middle years facility was completed in late 2020 with another four classrooms completed and ready for use. We were also successful in obtaining a State Government grant of \$5,000,000 to partly fund the construction of STEM and Performing Arts facilities for the expanding Senior campus. At the Primary Years campus, works were almost complete on three new classrooms, these

being part of the final block of six classrooms that will be completed in 2021.

Hillcrest Developments

The Primary Multipurpose Hall was completed in October 2020 and minor landscape works are underway. Work was also commenced on connecting the mains sewer to the Hillcrest campus.

Masterplanning

Whilst the masterplans for both schools is fairly resolved, we continue to update these as we plan new projects. Further progress has been made with Council and DWELP on the schools plans for drainage areas around Rivercrest and our Environmental Reserve.

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

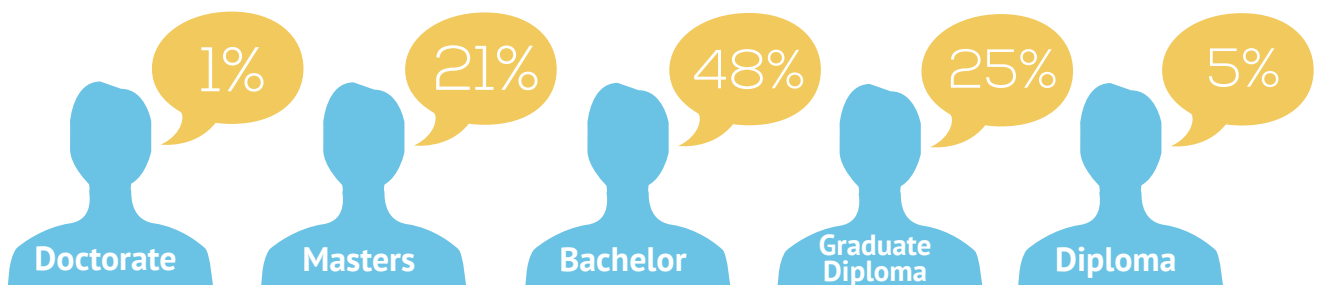
Due to the COVID pandemic, we deferred the rollout of Satisfaction surveys for Students, Parents and Staff, to the following year. Despite this, both Colleges did take a number of opportunities to seek feedback from all stakeholder groups of these groups. This helped shape and implement a number of its COVID responses over the course of the year.

An example of this was the decision to make a phone call to every CREST family in the early stages of the pandemic. Whilst a lot of the feedback gained from these groups was informal, it was highly valuable to the agile and successful delivery of service to the CREST school community.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) monitors the registration of teachers throughout Victoria, ensuring all teachers meet the standards of professional teaching practice within three domains of knowledge, practice and engagement.

Besides the formal tertiary qualifications that are necessary for a teacher to gain registration through the VIT, teachers are encouraged to work towards a high level of continual professional learning.





CHILD SAFE STATEMENT

CREST has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.



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VISION

To be a leading provider of quality Christian Education, delivered by Christian staff, equipping students for a life of faithful service.



Crest Education is a leading provider of quality Christian education to the Casey and Cardinia communities of South East Melbourne. Our magnificent 138 acre property serves as a precinct for two Colleges, Hillcrest and Rivercrest, an Equestrian Centre, Agriculture/Horticulture precinct and Environmental Centre with a significant area set aside for waterways and reclaimed bush bordering Cardinia Creek.