



# Blue Gum Montessori School Annual Report 2014

## **School Mission**

To provide an excellent Montessori Education for 3 – 12 year olds

## **School Vision**

Confident, independent, community minded children, inspired to a life-long love of learning

## **School Philosophy**

To acknowledge each child and to support the natural phases of their development.

We are an independent school that values community life and that actively fosters the partnership between children, parent/carers and professional staff.



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## GENERAL INFORMATION

Blue Gum Montessori School Inc. (the “Association”) is an incorporated association which has a stated vision and mission. The objects of the Association are stated in the Rules of Association (the “Rules”).

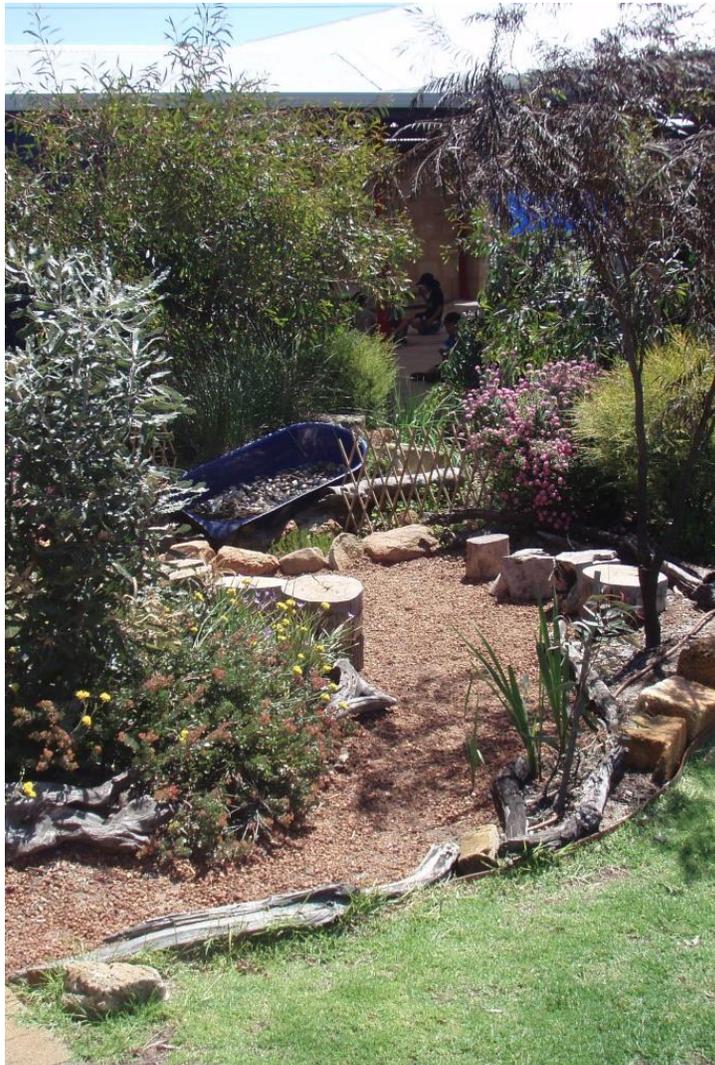
The Association is governed by a Governing Board (the “Board”) of between eight and 12 directors. Board members are appointed every year at the Annual General Meeting. In the event that nominations exceed vacancies, elections are held. Directors may also be coopted by the board during the year. The board is required by the Rules to ensure a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary are appointed at all times.

Board Meetings are held regularly during term time.

An Annual General Meeting is held each year within four months after the end of the financial year of the Association.

Notice of this meeting is given to all members by email and the school pigeon holes.

The Annual Report and Accounts are generally available to Members of the Association from the School Office before the AGM. The Annual Report and accounts are open for discussion at the AGM.



# MINUTES AGM 2014

**Date:** Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014  
**Time:** 7.30pm  
**Location:** Blue Gum Montessori School Grounds  
**Attendees:** As per signatures contained on AGM Family Sign In Sheet.  
**Apologies:** As per proxy forms received.  
**Visitors:** Nil.

## Item No. Discussion

### 1. Opening and Welcome

The meeting was opened by Chairperson Jake Kilcoyne-Betts at 7:30pm and all were welcomed to the meeting.

### 2. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

### 3. Acceptance of minutes of 2013 AGM

There were no questions arising out of the minutes which were passed as true and correct.

### 4. Annual Report

#### 4.1. Strategic Plan Update

An update on the implementation of the Strategic Plan was given by Alex Hyndman.

#### 4.2. Questions Arising from Annual Report

The Treasurer spoke to the Treasurer's Report.

The Chairperson spoke to his report.

There were no questions arising from the Annual Report.

### 5. Questions arising from proposed Rules of Association.

The Chairperson summarised the proposed Rules of Association which contain the following changes:

- That the term of each Board Director be for three years, with three positions becoming vacant each year. This will allow for greater continuity of governance for the school.
- That the Principal be an ex-officio member of the Board, who attends but does not have voting rights at Board meetings. This clause was overlooked in the previous revision of the Rules.

The implementation of the three year term and vacancy cycle was explained to members.

### 6. Voting on proposed Rules of Association

It was unanimously passed that the new Rules of Association be adopted.

## 7. Election of School Board

Chairperson Jake Kilcoyne-Betts advised that he would be stepping down from the Board.

There were 10 nominations for Director positions. As per the Rules of Association, 10 Director positions were declared vacant.

The nominations were:

Jean-Philippe Clarenc  
Alex Hyndman  
Rachel Mirco  
Jemma Doak  
Selina Horrocks  
Denise Pietersen  
Hennie du Toit  
Anna Black  
Paul Graham  
Susan Cooke

Directors as described above were elected unopposed.

## 8. Appointment of an Auditor

The Business Manager has recommended that the current Auditor, Allan King, continue. It was unanimously carried that the current auditor be retained.

## 9. General Business

The Chairperson advised the members that the Principal, Ms Janet Laing had tendered her resignation, and would be leaving the school at the conclusion of Term 2. Mr Kilcoyne-Betts thanked Ms Laing for her years of service to the school. She will be missed and Mr Kilcoyne-Betts wished her the very best in her future endeavours.

## 10. Close

There were no further comments or questions from the floor and the meeting was closed at 8:22pm.

**Draft Minutes Completed** 3 April 2014

**Final Minutes Completed**

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**Jake Kilcoyne-Betts**

**Selina Horrocks**

**Chairperson**

**Secretary**

## **GOVERNING BOARD 2013/14**

<b>Chairperson</b>	Selina Horrocks
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Anna Black
<b>Secretary</b>	Jemma Doak
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sue Cooke
<b>Director</b>	Rachel Mirco
<b>Director</b>	Alex Hyndman
<b>Director</b>	Hennie du Toit
<b>Director</b>	Paul Graham
<b>Director</b>	Amanda Blackburn

## **CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015**

### **Selina Horrocks**

I have been on the Board of Directors at Blue Gum since December 2013, and have been Chair of the Board since the 2014 AGM.

I am the mother of three boys – Mitchell (Coolibah), Fletcher and Hayden (Karri) and I have been a parent at Blue Gum since 2008.

After completing a Bachelor of Arts with Honours, I have spent my career in the tertiary education and government sectors in policy and legislation, the last eight years with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. I have previously spent three and a half years on the Board of Management of a high profile Perth private school, and was Secretary of the WA Cricket Umpires' Association for two years.

I joined the Board because I wanted to use my skills and experience to contribute to the school that has done so much for my children.

2014 was a year of great change at Blue Gum during which I led the Board through the recruitment of a fantastic new Principal and the development of a significant growth plan for the school.

I am renominating because I would like to continue to contribute to our wonderful school.

## CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015

### **Anna Black**

I have been a Director since last year's AGM and took up the role of Vice Chair in September. I have been an active member of the Strategic Planning, Human Resources and Policy Sub-Committees and have contributed to the development of the long term planning for the school and the recruitment of our Principal. I am currently involved with the Board policy review process.

Our son, Owen, is in Jarrah class and we have another boy due for arrival in July. I started my professional career as a geophysicist and have since held roles in the areas of strategic planning, risk management and project management at BHP Billiton. I recently qualified as a Career Counsellor/Coach and now work both at UWA assisting students with their career planning and as a workforce diversity consultant to mining companies.

Being a Board Director has been a great learning experience for me and I would like the opportunity to continue to use my skills alongside other committed parents. In particular I look forward to assisting with the exciting future plans for the School and to ensure that we make positive changes to provide the best Montessori education, care and enrichment for our kids and those to come.

### **Jemma Doak**

I am Mum to Violet in Boab and Aubrey in Karri. I have been at Blue Gum for nearly 9 years. When my family began, Blue Gum operated out of two campuses; Beeliar primary and the now child care centre across the road from school.

I was lured in to my first volunteer role at Blue Gum within days and have continued ever since in a variety of roles as book fundraiser, Class Liaison in JP & MP; expanded the newsletter from a black and blue A4 sheet to electronic and colour; P&C and the school Board.

I have been a Board member since 2013. I am the second longest serving member on the Board up for renomination. My current role is as Secretary which I am happy to continue doing.

I think the most important contribution I make to the new Board is my longevity at Blue Gum and on the Board. Continuity of knowledge is important from a Board perspective and of the school history as we consolidate our growing school.

I am committed to helping our school community and staff, create the best Blue Gum that we can. It's exciting times for our school, and I look forward to being part of it blossoming further.

Work wise I am self-employed with an organic whole food business, Shiatsu and Reflexology.  
BA English (Double - Film & TV, & Visual Arts), MA Fine Art (unfinished), Diploma Shiatsu, Diploma Reflexology, Cert. 4 Small Business Management

## **CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015**

### **Sue Cooke (Board Treasurer since October 2014)**

Sue joined the Board in March 2014, prior to which she had been a member of the Finance Committee since she joined the school in 2012.

Professionally, Sue has been a Portfolio Analyst in the Financial Services industry for 20 years, having obtained a Bachelor's degree (Honours) in Pure Maths and Statistics at Exeter University (England).

Sue has been an active member of the Blue Gum community since 2012, serving as Class Liaison, P & Communications Officer and a member of the Finance Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee. Her children are Jacob, 6, in Wandoo, and Alex, 3, starting Junior Primary in Term 3.

### **Alex Hyndman**

I'm the father of 5 year old Saskia, who is currently making mischief in Melaleuca, as well as 1 year old Archie.

4 days a week I'm paid to think about climate change and greenhouse gases for Woodside. I have however managed to keep Wednesdays for "Daddy Day", which typically involves doing the school runs, taking Archie swimming, following things up for the school board and an after school play at Meller Park.

As well as engineering and commerce degrees, I have trained in project management and strategic planning. I have previously volunteered on the boards of two other incorporated associations.

I'm the longest standing board member nominating at this AGM. My biggest contribution to the board has been to work with other board members to develop and implement the school's strategic plan. Most recently this has meant focusing on the school's expansion.

I'd like to continue on the board in order to provide some continuity during a very important transition.

### **Hennie du Toit**

Hennie is the proud father of Leon and Oscar (Karri) and is fully wed to the school with wife Lee being the Tuart Directress.

As a qualified Architect with international experience, he has since 2010 made a home for his family in Perth and joined the BGMS Community. He is currently a Senior Design Manager for a large national construction company.

Hennie joined the BGMS Board in 2013 and was henceforth tasked to the Strategic Planning Committee in advising on design matters and project managing the school's recent minor construction works, and along with others on the SPC is currently working on the early Master planning activities for the school's future expansion objectives.

## CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015

### **Amanda Blackburn**

My name is Amanda Blackburn and I am currently a Board member assisting with strategic planning and site expansion of the school. I completed a Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing and Management at Curtin University and for most of my working life have assisted in strategic planning and development projects in both marketing and land development companies, collaborating with different people and interest groups.

I am a full time mum to Jefferson (Wandoo) and Christian (Wattle). My last "paid" job I worked for LandCorp, the State's Land Development agency, which I believe my experiences and contacts can assist the school in its future expansion.

I am a strong believer in the Montessori philosophy and our wonderful school community and will talk non-stop to anyone who is interested. I enjoyed my time as Class Liaison for Melaleuca and love assisting in the classroom and school events where I can.

It is an exciting time for the school and I believe I can bring my marketing, strategic planning and land development experience on the Board.

### **Amy Cleasby**

Thank you for the opportunity to nominate for a position on the Board of Directors at Blue Gum Montessori.

I am qualified Youth Worker, Career Development Counsellor and Frontline Manager. My current employment as a project coordinator for Curtin University's Ethics, Equity & Social Justice department means I have the skills to recognise and address diversity and inclusivity issues, particularly around education, disability and cultural identity. I am a Curtin Ally (providing support for diverse sexuality and gender issues), a cultural diversity trainer and also sit on the University's Universal Design Reference Group, which promotes using access-for-all design elements to both academic and professional staff.

My intention to nominate for the school Board is primarily due to my family's commitment to the Blue Gum community and its Montessori philosophy. I believe as a Board member my experience could provide support and guidance to enhance the future of Blue Gum, particularly in the areas of ethical governance, human resource policy and cultural inclusivity issues.

## CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015

### **Damien Hills**

My eldest daughter (3yo) started in Jarrah last year and I am excited by the opportunities that the Blue Gum Montessori community can offer her and our family.

I have served as CEO for two not-for-profit community-based Boards for 6 years, including as an Executive Director. I have extensive experience in all aspects of corporate policy development – Governance, Finance and Audit, Codes of Conduct, EEO, HS&E and the supporting tools that can assist and support an executive to affect tangible outcomes.

I have worked in the not-for-profit, public and private sectors, as well as for Executive Government. My qualifications include a BSc. (Environmental Science), AICD Company Director's Course, and Emergency Response. I have training and experience in group skills, facilitation and communications planning.

As a Director I would strive to apply my fiduciary and ethical responsibilities in working with my fellow team members on the Board to continue developing a sustainable foundation for achieving Blue Gum's vision and mission.

### **Rachel Finlayson**

We started at Blue Gum mid 2010 because I felt that a Montessori education would provide a stimulating learning environment for my eldest child. I now have Kayde in Karri, Calen in Melaleuca and Keely eager to start!

I enjoy contributing to the school community and have been Karri Class Liaison for the past year and also the Communications Officer for the P&C.

I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Asian Studies and a Post Graduate Diploma in Education. These degrees enabled me to travel and live abroad for a good portion of my twenties whilst working as an English as a Second Language (ESL) Teacher. Upon returning to Australia, I qualified as a IELTS Examiner (English Language Proficiency Exam) and hope to return to that job in the future.

I believe my skills and experience would prove an asset to the board, firstly as I have an Education background and secondly as I have strong ties with the community aspect of our school.

## CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015

### **Greg Hardwich**

I am willing to offer my services as a business coach or a board member. If you feel I can be of value to the school or the board, please let me know how I should proceed.

My career extends to more than 20 years in executive management roles in product and service based businesses, servicing Mining, Oil and Gas, IT and Utility sectors at a national and international level. Consistently demonstrating visionary leadership and executive business savvy, I have competencies to spearhead strategic, business development, operational, organisational and financial performance.

I have an executive master's degree in business administration (EMBA) from the University of Western Australia.

I have been a professional business Coach since 2012. I work with the owners of small and medium businesses to help them develop the insights and skills they need to ensure that their business will succeed and thrive in a way that is lasting and sustainable.

My Core values are:

Live Right

- Take care of yourself, your family, your staff, your customers, your community, and the environment
- Live with integrity, do no harm, live sustainably
- Love life, have fun, live with passion and enjoy your success

Have an abundance mentality

- Make the pie bigger
- Be a lifelong learner
- Commit to continuous improvement

Be Proactive

- Anticipate obstacles, anticipate success
- Know where you want to be, know how to get there
- Act Now!

## CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION 2015

### **Tom Watkin**

Tom is friendly team player who relishes a challenge and works well under pressure. He genuinely cares about the development of his fellow team members and continuously seeks to improve the organisation in whatever role he fills.

As Manager Groundwater Services for a Perth based consulting firm, Tom manages team performance and strategy while driving business development. With a keen interest in strategic leadership he believes that building a positive vision combined with a strong outcome orientation while looking after the welfare and development of all stakeholders will ultimately lead to success. Tom is skilled in the following:

- Strategic leadership
- Professional rigour
- Change leadership
- Strategy formation and implementation
- Business development
- Long-term stakeholder relationships
- Project management and delivery

Watching his son Oliver (Wattle class) thrive at Blue Gum over the last year has proved to be a source of inspiration. Assisting with the governance and continued growth of the school as it enters an exciting new era is a prospect that would give Tom immense fulfilment. He endeavours to put his all into the role and keep Blue Gum as an excellent place to allow our children to grow and learn.

### **Tim Patel**

I am the proud father of Joshua Patel, who has been at the school for 3 years, and 7 month old Phoenix, who will join Blue Gum during the next few years. Hence, I have a vested interest in ensuring that the children attending Blue Gum get the education and care that their parents expect.

I am the Director of Emergency Medicine at Rockingham General Hospital. Our Department treats over 50000 patients a year and is growing year on year. I lead a staff of more than 150 members and am ultimately accountable for both staff and patient care.

My role as Director involves the following:

1. Education. Our medical educational programme is both progressive and innovative and is delivering the education that our doctors expect and deserve.

2. Clinical Governance.

I ensure that we have effective risk management strategies in place and that we all learn from patient complaints and incidents in the workplace. We have a robust system in place and ensure a multi-disciplinary approach whenever necessary.

3. Policy review and implementation. Our work is varied and involves several stakeholders. Hence, policy review and implementation is vital for ensuring safe medical practice.

4. Financial Management.

Hospitals, schools and any other business have to balance both income and expenditure. I am responsible for my department budget, but not responsible for writing the accounts.

These are but a few of the areas my job covers. There are many others but fortunately I still get to spend half of my working week spending time with and treating patients, which still remains my primary interest in Emergency Medicine.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

## 2014 CHAIR'S REPORT

### Overview

2014 has been a year of significant change for Blue Gum Montessori School, but it has laid the foundation for the growth and development of our wonderful school.

Our vision and mission remind us that we are all here to ensure our children receive an excellent Montessori education to the age of 12, to develop into confident, independent, community minded children, inspired to a lifelong love of learning.

The school is still in a strong position, with good enrolment numbers, healthy finances, and a growing, vibrant sense of community. So many members have given generously of their time, effort and skill, whether as class liaisons, on Board subcommittees or on the P&C, by organising Cuppa & Chats, or by contributing in a thousand ways, large and small, to school life. We have an excellent group of educational staff who make our children's experience at Blue Gum something that sets them up for life, and an equally dedicated administrative team who keep the school functioning.

### Change of Leadership

The Board was saddened to receive the resignation of our long-standing Principal, Ms Janet Laing just prior to the 2014 AGM. Janet had been with the school for ten years, five of those as Principal, and the impact she had on the children and broader school community during those years cannot be understated. Much of the bedding down on our current site, the development of the play areas and grounds, the addition of Mallee and what was Banksia (now Coolibah and Biara), the Admin block and Kambarra the undercover area, all occurred under the watchful eye of Janet. Parents often remarked on Janet's presence at the gate every morning and her ability to welcome students onto the grounds personally. An indication of the affection the children felt for her can be found in the speeches of our graduating students.

With Janet's departure, the first and biggest job that fell to me as the new Chair of a new Board was to recruit us a new Principal. I am deeply indebted to Terence Lee, Andy Vernie and Anna Black who formed the HR Committee with me and brought immeasurable knowledge and expertise to the recruitment process. They all worked tirelessly and diligently to make sure we made the right decision for our School.

I also want to acknowledge the wonderful Jenny Moyles, who stepped into the role of Acting Principal with her usual grace and enthusiasm. Jenny worked hard with all the staff for three terms to ensure our children were thriving and everything continued to run smoothly and the Board was very grateful for Jenny's assistance during this time.

After a rigorous recruitment process, we found an outstanding educational leader with a passion for the Montessori philosophy, Dr Maree Matthews. Maree has a PhD from RMIT University in pedagogical leadership, action research, the International Baccalaureate and the Reggio Emilia approach. Maree commenced at Blue Gum in the final week of Term 4 2014, and it was fantastic for her to be able to share the end of the year with us.

Maree has been Head of an international school in Brussels, Belgium, and was more recently the Principal at a Melbourne Montessori school of a similar size to Blue Gum. She is highly regarded in the Victorian Montessori community, having established the Montessori Principal's Network there, and has established professional connections within the Montessori Australia Foundation. Maree believes in a collaborative approach in delivering a sound Montessori education and in achieving the strategic goals of the School. She also has a strong commitment to the ongoing professional development of herself and her staff.

## **Board Activity**

Through necessity, the Board had a more hands-on approach for most of 2014; however, we continued to develop our role of independent oversight, with a focus on risk management and strategic leadership, together with our core legal responsibilities of:

- maintaining a satisfactory standard of education and satisfactory level of care for students;
- accounting for the quality of the educational programs which they provide;
- accounting for the use of public funds received; and
- fostering positive relationships with key stakeholders such as parents and students by ensuring transparency of information about finances, policies, strategic goals and governance. (Revised 2014 Non-Government Schools Registration Standards, p. 7.)

The Strategic Planning Subcommittee has worked hard to implement and achieve the outcomes in the Strategic Plan. The strategic planning process identified that the ideal class ratio that we want to work towards is a 4:3:2 model – that is: four Junior Primary classes, three Middle Primary classes and two Upper Primary classes. However, we have been somewhat constrained by our site capacity limitations. This year, different options for the site were explored and, to our delight, we discovered that the Department of Housing was willing to negotiate on the sale of the land to the West of the carpark. This negotiation process continues, along with the development of a Master Plan for the school which will guide our growth and development into the future.

While work was focusing on longer term options for our site, the Board also needed to make some decisions about the immediate future and how to cater for our existing Middle Primary students, who were beginning to burst out of their classrooms. Our enrolment numbers are strong and we added another Upper Primary class for the start of the 2015 school year. This is the first step in providing sustainability in our Middle and Upper Primary cycles as it gives our Middle Primary students space into which to grow.

We owe much to Alex Hyndman, Hennie du Toit and the Strategic Planning Committee for all this site development work.

The Policy Committee comprising Paul Graham, Anna Black and myself have undertaken a rigorous review process of the Board's policies and procedures against the requirements we need to meet under the new National Quality Framework and National Quality Standards which come into force in January 2016. 2016 is also when our school is due for re-registration so work is progressing in collaboration with the Principal to ensure we meet all our regulatory obligations.

## **Changes in Board Membership**

Being on the Board is no easy ride, and it is a great privilege to work with such a talented, passionate and dedicated group of parents who generously give so much of their time to the governance of the school.

This year has seen the departure of two Directors – JP Clarenc and Denise Pietersen – and the addition of one – Amanda Blackburn.

Sadly, this AGM sees us farewell one of our longest-serving members on the Board, Rachel Mirco, who has held the position of Community Life Coordinator for the past four years. Rachel's commitment to developing the Blue Gum community has seen us grow from a few volunteers organising events and fundraisers to a fully-fledged P&C and an annual fundraising event – the Pluck A Duck Raffle. Fortunately, while Rachel is stepping down from the Board, she intends to stay active on the P&C.

We are also saying farewell to Paul Graham who has provided excellent legal counsel to the Board this year. Paul's work is requiring more of his time and he is happy not to seek reappointment in the knowledge that there is a wealth of enthusiasm and skills to fill all available Board positions.

This year will be the last that the entire board is up for election as our Rules of Association now provide for only one third of the Board positions to be vacated at each AGM. This gives the school much needed continuity of governance, something that is particularly important when it comes to ensuring regulatory compliance.

### **Changes in Board Membership cont.**

Current Board members standing for election again are I, Anna Black, Jemma Doak, Susan Cooke, Alex Hyndman, Hennie du Toit and Amanda Blackburn, leaving up to five extra positions available for filling. It is pleasing to see that we have nominations from Rachel Finlayson, Thomas Watkin, Amy Cleasby, Tim Patel, Greg Hardwich and Damien Hills. This brings the total nominations to 13 and, for the first time under our new Rules of Association, we will need to have an election at the AGM. I think this willingness to get involved in the governance of our school demonstrates that the community feels the sense of opportunity and excitement for the coming years.

I hope to be one of those continuing on the Board and, if elected by the Board, to continue as Chairperson. However, if this is not to be, I wish the new Board and their Chairperson, all the very best in this continuing journey.

Selina Horrocks

Chairperson – Governing Board  
March 2015

# 2014 TREASURER'S REPORT

Year ended 31 December 2014

## 1. Financials – the year in review

### Income

Total income increased by 15.6% to \$2.37m.

Income from students, including tuition fees, increased by 6.9% to \$1.42m.

Government funding increased by 31.9% to \$918k and now represents 39% of total income. From Jan 1 2014 all recurrent funding payments are made under the Australian Education Act 2013.

### Expenditure

Total expenditure, excluding depreciation and loan interest, increased by 5.8% to \$2.06m

Total salary costs increased by 4.8% to \$1.35m,

Depreciation and interest at \$136k remained stable compared to the \$146k from 2013.

### Overall operating results

Whilst the school does not seek to make a profit, it is a financial objective that each year makes a fair and equitable contribution to the long term viability of the school and does not or is not subsidised by other years in the long run. This maintains equity between each year of parents. Adequate provision for the long term replacement of our buildings at the end of their useful life is achieved by the charging of depreciation.

Excluding depreciation and interest, operating surplus increased by \$195k to \$440k.

Overall surplus, inclusive of interest and depreciation, increased by \$205k to \$304k.

Note that budgeted renovations of \$100k to accommodate increased student numbers in Middle Primary did not occur in 2014. The renovations and restructuring of classrooms occurred at the end of 2014 /beginning 2015 – final costs will be reflected in the 2015 figures.

The fact that we have again made a surplus means that the school continues to meet its financial objectives.

### Viability and Cash position

The key measure of long term viability of the school is collection of sufficient surplus to meet the changing needs of the school, retain quality staff and remain competitive in the market place. The key measure of short term viability is sufficient cash immediately available to pay bills as they fall due, primarily staffing costs and loan repayments.

## Viability and Cash position cont.

### Summary cash flow for the year

	<b>\$000</b>
Cash at beginning of the year	\$ 989
Cash generated from operations	\$ 447
Interest received	\$ 28
Repayments on loans (capital and interest)	\$ (66)
Sub total	\$ 1,398
Capital expenditure	
Cash at end of the year	\$ 1,398

At 31 December 2014, the school had \$547k of outstanding loans.

## **2. Outlook – 2015 and beyond**

The school's financial position is stable and the financial forecast for 2015 should again see the school make a modest surplus. This puts us in a sound position to consolidate our school by entering into the next phase of our building development.

Treasurer

March 2014

## 2014 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal's report is prepared in accordance with 2014 Non-Government Schools' requirements of the Registration Standards in Western Australia.

### 1. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Blue Gum Montessori School was established in 1983. It is an independent school for 3–12 years old situated on the edge of the wetlands in Bibra Lake, Perth.

The students who attend our school often commence in our Playgroup program. Attending our Junior Primary program is a natural progression. Students make transition with ease. The characteristics of the students are best described by the following categories:

#### Playgroup

Male	29
Female	40

#### Pre-Kindergarten

Male	12
Female	11

#### Kindergarten

Male	20
Female	16

#### Pre-Primary

Male	10
Female	15

#### Primary School

Males	37
Female	42

**Pre-Primary to Year 6            104**

**Indigenous                            1%**

**LOTE                                    13%**

We also have **66%** of students that come through the normal enrolment process with entry into all levels of the school.

## **Contextual Information cont.**

The School is committed to educating children as global citizens for the 21st century. The School offers a Montessori prepared environment. This highly specialized learning environment fosters the children's innate desire to learn and encourages the development of independence a necessary skill for future learning. The scientific based activities, materials and equipment is scaffolded in complexity to meet the natural phases of child development. It is critical to provide opportunities for the development of thought and problem solving: as key executive functioning skills. The ages of the children in each class span a three year period, 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, providing many opportunities for the development of social skills and self-awareness. Peer coaching and collaborative learning is fundamental to a Montessori educational milieu, which is encouraged and supported in a strong culture of pastoral care. This framework ensures students are exposed to learning opportunities that foster the necessary academic skills for further success and learning for life. A Montessori education provides engagement and a firm foundation for the children to become motivated individuals with ability to develop their full potential.

The School is governed by supportive parents, mentored by a principal and a handpicked team of professional teachers and staff, all of whom are dedicated to provide a caring, educational community environment for both the children and the school community.

## **2. STAFF ATTENDANCE, RETENTION, STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

### **2.1 Staff attendance:**

Data is collected for staff absence for sick or personal leave. It does not include those times when staff is absent due to activities such as camps, excursions, professional development or other activities which are part of normal school activities.

The average daily attendance for teaching staff was 97%

### **2.2 Staff Retention:**

The retention rate (teaching staff) from 2013 to the end of the 2014 academic year was **100%**

Janet Laing (Principal) resigned March 2014

Jenny Moyles (Acting Principal March-December 2014)

Catherine Day (Teacher in Wattle class) Maternity Leave 2014

Louise Blaxell (Assistant in. " " ) " " 2014

### **2.3 Teacher Qualifications:**

All teaching staff at Blue Gum Montessori School is registered as members of the Teacher Registration Board Western Australia which includes a Working with Children Check and are qualified to teach in Western Australian schools. (Attachment 1)

**Workforce Composition:**

	Number	FTE
<b>Teaching Staff</b>		
Male	0	0
Female	9	7.4
Indigenous	0	0
<b>Auxiliary Education Staff</b>		
Male	0	0
Female	8	7.8
Indigenous	0	0
<b>Operational Service Staff</b>		
Male	0	0
Female	5	4
Indigenous	0	0

**2.4 Staff Professional Learning Development and Growth:**

All members of staff have the opportunity to undertake professional learning, development and growth. This is offered to staff according to the school's Professional Learning policy and in response to the results of an individual's appraisal program. Professional development is part of our school's mission and demonstrates an example of the School's commitment to quality teaching and to life-long learning.

The School differentiates between professional development, learning and growth. The strategies to deliver these aspects of professional learning range for example from internal/external knowledge and skill development to mentoring, coaching and professional partnerships. The school considers all staff to be members of a vibrant community of learners.

In determining the cost of professional learning reported below, only sessions formally purchased events are included. The costs reflect registration for attendance and provision of teacher relief as required. The School has not attempted to cost informal or internal events in this report.

The costs for 2014 include facilitation fees for the Board strategic planning sessions.

The expenditure for 2014 was **\$22,578**

Professional learning for teaching staff included the following areas:

- Montessori Music with Jay McKeever 11-13 March 2014 3x4 hour sessions
- Montessori lecture with Naomi Stuckey 28 July 2014 2 hours
- Safe4Kids with Holly Ann Martin 29 August 2014
- Fire Equipment Training by FESA 29 August 2014
- Specific Learning Difficulties Katie Hodgkin from AISWA 14 November 2014

### 3. KEY STUDENT OUTCOMES

#### 3.1 Student attendance

Year		Male % attendance	Female % attendance
Yr 1	Cycle 2	94.62	83.43
Yr2	Cycle 2	96.61	97.44
Yr 3	Cycle 2	95.70	96.36
Yr 4	Cycle 3	88.37	95.93
Yr5	Cycle 3	96.95	96.43
Yr 6	Cycle 3	90.41	90.70

#### **Non-attendance at school is managed by the following procedures:**

- The attendance roll is marked by the teacher every morning and afternoon
- This information is reported and recorded in administration
- Parents/carer are responsible for notifying the school if their child is absent for any reason which is recorded by the school (any sequential absences are referred to the Principal for follow-up)
- If a student is away, administration notifies the parent/carer to ask why the child is not at school, this is then recorded and the Principal follows-up accordingly.

#### **NAP Annual Assessments**

Each year the students participate in the National Assessment Program. (NAP)

The National Assessment Program is run at the direction of the National Education Council. It includes:

- the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- three-yearly NAP assessments in science literacy, civics and citizenship, and information and communication technology (ICT) literacy
- International sample assessments.

NAP provides an opportunity for all students enrolled in the school to be benchmarked according to other students in Years 3, 5, 7 & 9.

This information is useful for parents and carers, schools, state and territory authorities and the wider community to gain a snapshot of student learning. It is imperative that the NAP results are considered in the context of the individual school and more specifically for the individual child. If a child has a learning challenge this data is not shown on the global results. Individual scores can have an impact on the overall scores and this is considered at an individual school level. All parents have access to their child's test results.

The information gained from NAP is used by the teachers to inform student learning, curriculum planning and is correlated to the wider learning profile of the students learning within our Montessori school.

## NAP Annual Assessments cont.

The BGMS shows the level of participation compared to the national average.

<b>BGMS Student Participation</b>	<b>2014</b>
Assessed	100%
Exempt	0%
Participation	100%
Absent	0%
Withdrawn	0%
Australian Average	95.1%

### 3.2 Proportions of Year 3 and 5 students meeting national reading, writing, spelling and numeracy benchmarks in 2014 compared to the Australian Average

2014	Numeracy BGMS	Australian Average	Reading BGMS	Australian Average	Writing BGMS	Australian Average	Grammar & Punctuation	Australian Average	Persuasive Text	Australian Average	Spelling	Australian Average
<b>Yr. 3</b>	445	402	480	418	409	402	483	426	409	402	465	412
<b>Yr. 5</b>	561	488	628	501	530	468	604	504	530	468	549	498

In summary, BGMS achieved higher than the Australian average in all areas of the assessed curriculum. It is important to note that the students at BGMS do not engage in rote learning but a holistic curriculum for life-long learning. It is noted that the year 3 Persuasive writing text score was still above the Australian average and it is recognized as an area of learning for our students. Persuasive text writing is quite challenging and takes all students some time to master.

### 3.3 Value Added

Blue Gum Montessori School value adds to its curriculum through its focus on the Montessori philosophy of educating the whole person: body, mind and spirit. The School strives to ensure the students are supported to become independent, confident and community minded with a lifelong love of learning. To this end, the School provides strong pastoral care, opportunities to live the School values and learn within the structures of a community. It is expected that the students with clearly defined expectations in numeracy and literacy. These activities are supported by specialist programs in the primary years in Physical Education, French and Visual Arts.

### 3.4 Post primary school destinations

	<b>Public High School</b>	<b>Independent School</b>	<b>Home Schooling</b>
2014 Graduates	20%	80%	0%

## 4 Community Satisfaction Survey

A parent satisfaction survey was conducted in 2014 by the School Board. We appreciate constructive feedback as it assists to consolidate our current operations and future strategic planning.

The summary over provides an overview of the findings.

### General Information

#### Sample

There were 53 responses (compared with 83 last year), 15 were anonymous. Of the respondents, 80% had a child in JP, 29% had a child in MP and 14% had a child in UP.

### Parent Satisfaction highlights

- 92% of respondents are happy that they sent their child(ren) to BGMS (6% unhappy, 2% undecided)
- The vast majority of respondents felt that the school was delivering on its values to provide a broad education to the children. The only lower response was the teaching of a language other than English.
- Parents are very happy with the teaching and the development of their child(ren). 89% of respondents say the teachers are meeting or exceeding their expectations (4% not meeting expectations and 8% undecided)
- Parents are generally happy with their value for money.
- Parents are generally satisfied with all aspects of communication especially the admin team and the frequency of Board communications. Some comments indicated more regular and detailed communication with teachers about their individual children is desired.
- 88% of respondents read the school newsletters regularly so this is probably a more effective method of communication than is sometime felt.
- Ideas to improve communication mostly revolve around getting better exposure to the classrooms or more frequent feedback from teachers.
- Of the respondents, 91% indicated they would help out at the school if their skills were needed and 70% would join the Board or a subcommittee if their skills were needed.
- Extra-curricular activities are still wanted by parents (51% wanting to see more). Strong feedback received on requested activities including music/choir, sport, gym/dance and drama.
- A significant proportion (57%) of respondents would like to see on-site before- and after-school care.
- A broad range of events were cited when asked for a favourite BGMS event (including book week, sports day, mother's and father's days, Christmas event, birthday bash etc.) indicating that parents and children enjoy different types of events and variety is appreciated.
- Strong positive feedback was given in relation to parent Montessori education events attended, and there is a strong desire for more of these opportunities.
- Preference for "affordable school fees" and "excellent facilities and services" was balanced (56% v 44%) and unchanged since last year, indicating that the balance is OK.
- Strong agreement with the principle of providing additional capacity in the short term. The response to how much funding should be put in to the short-term option was event spread as was the acceptance of inconvenience.

## Parent Satisfaction highlights

cont.

- Strong desire for parent consultation and significant uncertainty about the short term proposal (which has since been mitigated with an information session)
- Strong agreement with the principle of the long term option and the opportunity to improve school facilities (highest priorities are, in order, larger playground, additional classrooms, multi-purpose hall, larger library, larger staff room, parents space, meeting rooms and water playground)
- Opinion is divided on how much capital should be spent, whether inconvenience is acceptable, the desire for parent consultation and concern around Roe8. A large proportion (39%) of parents are unsure about the long term proposal.

## Overall Summary - Comparison to Last Year

Delivery on mission, vision and values – slight drop	Slight decrease
Satisfaction with pace of development, class size, teaching and support, value for money – slight drop	Slight decrease
Satisfaction with overall services/facilities	Slight increase
Teachers exceeding expectations	Drop from 67% to 42% but no change in total positive responses

Parents happy that they sent their child(ren) to BGMS	Slight decrease
Satisfaction with teacher and admin communication	Slight decrease
Busy bee/term job	No change, still varied responses
Importance and implementation of Montessori	As explained in MP/UP comments above
Desire for more Montessori parent education	Increased
Number of opportunities to learn about Montessori	Increased
Topics for parent Montessori education	Unchanged (strong interest in all options provided)
Delivery method for parent Montessori education	No major change. Strong interest in all formats except video/DVD
Reason for not attending information sessions	Unchanged (other commitments/babysitter top reason)
Families who have decided how long to keep children at BGMS	Decreased (83% to 63%)

#### 4. SOURCES OF FUNDING

<b>Income</b>	<b>000's</b>	<b>%</b>
Fees	\$ 1,249.00	53%
Commonwealth grants	\$ 549.00	23%
State Grants	\$ 275.00	12%
Other	\$ 295.00	12%
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Salaries	\$ 1,347.00	65%
Operation Costs	\$ 388.00	19%
Other	\$ 213.00	10%
Depreciation	\$ 116.00	6%
<b>Capital Expenditure 2013</b>		
Aust. Govt. Capital Grant Income	\$ -	0
Income allocated to Capital Projects	\$ -	0

Overall, the school had a productive year in maintaining a high quality education for the students. Special thanks to the Staff and the Board for their dedication and commitment to BGMS.

Jenny Moyles in collaboration with Maree Matthews (PhD) - March 2015