

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome all to the commencement of the 2022 school year. I hope that you had a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year holiday season. I also trust that all are ready for:

- a fresh beginning,
- to be open to new experiences, and
- are looking to continue your journey to human growth and fullness of being in 2022.

I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming our new Year 7s and students who have joined the Merici community in Years 8 through to Year 12. This year our College theme is *Serviam*. This Latin word means “to serve” and points to our hearts as authentic compasses, orienting us to valuing others and seeking justice for all. The symbols that will be important this year are thus the heart, hands and the compass. Green will be our colour, representing newness of life and growth.

Celebrating our 2021 Achievements

Congratulations to our Year 12 Class of 2021 for their exceptional academic achievements.

Four students successfully completed the IB Diploma Programme. All four of these students attained an ATAR well above the Australasian average.

69 students received their Year 12 ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. 47 students completed a Tertiary Package and received an ATAR. 22 students completed Accredited Packages, which included Vocational qualifications.

Our highest ATAR was **99.10**. Our median ATAR was 79.3 and our average ATAR was 78.64.

Ten (20%) students received an ATAR of 90 or higher. Twenty-five (49%) students received an ATAR of 80 or higher.

In this cohort of 74 students, we had 68 VET certificates awarded to students, which is well above the average across ACT colleges.

We encourage all students to keep in touch and let us know where their future journey of learning and adventure may take them. A destination survey will be sent out after main round offers are made; we look forward to their response. Please register to be a member of our Alumni by sending an email to Ros Parisi at ros.parisi@merici.act.edu.au.

Staffing

We welcome the following new staff to our community:

MERICI COLLEGE	Wise St Braddon ACT 2612	GPO Box 154 Canberra ACT 2601	Telephone (02) 6243 4100 Facsimile (02) 6243 4199	principal@merici.act.edu.au www.merici.act.edu.au
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Teaching Staff:

Tegan Bew, Academic Coordinator
Sally Borrman, Humanities Teacher
Bree Bowden, English Teacher
Rebecca Casey, Ningil House Coordinator
April Croft, Visual Art Teacher
Jess Giovinazzo, PE Teacher
Jason Kohlman, English/French Teacher
Jessica Lacey, Science Teacher
Alison McEwen, Creative and Performing Arts Coordinator
Stephanie Spiller, Global Coordinator
Jessica Tillack, Humanities Teacher
Maria Tolfree, Head of Mission and Community (Acting)
Carlia Zedde, PE Teacher

Support Staff:

Jack Elliot-Dunn, Science Lab Assistant
Gabriella Keane, Inclusive Education Assistant
Susan Rowell, Student Records
Milanda Efca Roxas, Inclusive Education Assistant
Madeline Hobbs, Counsellor

Current Staff - Changes

Damian Borgia, Penola House Coordinator
Kate Calley, Health and Physical Education Coordinator
Amy Connellan, 12 months leave
Kate Durham, Deputy Principal Wellbeing
Jenna Fisher – PE Teacher
Emma Kennedy, Tullow House Coordinator
Ed Mickleburgh, Mathematics Coordinator
Giles Thompson, 12 months leave
Brooke Wood, 12 months leave

Annual Improvement Plan 2022

As part of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, the Annual Improvement Plan focuses solely on the goals and tasks allocated and/or created for 2022. This plan will ensure a continued commitment to providing a positive and nurturing learning environment that supports our school's mission and vision for the future.

Mission Statement

Merici College empowers women to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

Vision Statement

Merici College endeavours to be a vibrant, faithful learning community that fosters excellence, and takes positive action to build a shared global future.

Purpose Statement

To educate women so that they are empowered to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

Values

Fidelitas
Integritas
Communitas
Spes



This year, the College will undergo Registration and this will be a major focus for College Leadership and the Annual Improvement Plan.

Actions as aligned to 2022-2024 Strategic Plan are as follows:

1. **STRONG FAITH - ASPIRATION: TO BUILD A STRONG AND POSITIVE CATHOLIC IDENTITY, WHERE FAITH IS NURTURED AND ALL ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE OTHERS.**

Domain: Catholic Identity
Strategy 1.1: Enrich charism and Catholic culture in the College
Strategy 1.3: Increase awareness and usage of prayer rooms
Domain: Service Learning
Strategy 1.4: Build understanding and commitment to Social Justice activities.
Domain: Faith Formation
Strategy 1.5: Formalise Professional Learning and Religious Education Accreditation for Staff.
Strategy 1.6: Strengthen Youth Ministry opportunities for the student body
Strategy 1.7: Promote parent engagement in faith formation activities
Domain: Mission in Curriculum
Strategy 1.8: Implement contemporary Religious Education practices

2. **POWERFUL LEARNING - ASPIRATION: AN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THAT INSPIRES LIFE-LONG LEARNING, ENABLING EVERYONE TO ACHIEVE INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE.**

Domain: Learning Frameworks
Strategy 2.1: Refine the International Baccalaureate for MYP and DP Programs
Strategy 2.2: Train staff in and embed practices in Catalyst Program and SEQTA

3. THRIVING COMMUNITY - ASPIRATION: A CONNECTED COMMUNITY THAT CULTIVATES COMPASSIONATE RELATIONSHIPS, WELLBEING AND THE WHOLE PERSON

Domain: Student Engagement and Wellbeing
Strategy 3.2: Promote student engagement and support mechanisms
Domain: Parent and Community Engagement
Strategy 3.3: Establish mechanisms to increase parent engagement, involvement and consultation across the school
Strategy 3.4: Expand engagement of the Alumni in current school activities.
Strategy 3.5: Build on connections with single-sex boys schools

4. SUSTAINABLE FUTURE - ASPIRATION: ETHICAL PRACTICES ENSURE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF ALL RESOURCES.

Domain: Marketing and Communication
Strategy 4.1: Embed a communications approach to sustain the College's reputation, enrolment target and diversity.
Domain: Facilities and Infrastructure
Strategy 4.2: Maintain and improve facilities and supporting resources to enable best practice in teaching and learning.
Domain: Financial Sustainability
Strategy 4.3: Ensure financial status sustains the desired educational offering.



Communication and Use of Mobile Phones

This year, in line with most schools and best practice, we are making some important changes to the access and use of mobile phones during the school day. We understand that mobile phones and technology are now a key part of modern life. Most students own a mobile phone with access to the internet and for safety reasons students will carry a mobile phone to contact home after or before school. However, mobile phones can and often do lead to several problems in school such as bullying, filming, disruption to lessons and inappropriate usage of the internet and social media leading to potential safeguarding issues.

Here at the Merici, we strongly encourage our students to develop socially and emotionally. This development is just as important as any academic progress or grades. Improving social skills and emotional development can best be done by talking to each other, interacting and developing real connections at break and lunchtime, as opposed to using their mobile phones.

For these reasons our new process for the use of mobile phones on the school site, during school hours is as follows:

(Year 7-10)

During the school day, during lesson time, students must not, under any circumstances, use mobile phones to make calls, send text messages, access the internet, access social media sites, take photos or use other applications.

Students can access their phones to check messages and respond briefly via text message during morning tea and lunch while at their locker. **Students are not to use their phones in any other part of the school grounds during morning tea and lunch.**

During class time, must store their Mobile phones in a secure locker (**Years 7-10**) or switched off (**Years 11-12**) unless given specific permission from their teacher, or if approval has been given by the College, e.g. to manage medical conditions.

Any student in **Year 7-10** seen using their mobile phone during school hours, including break and lunchtimes, will have their phone confiscated from Week 4, to allow students to become familiar with the new changes.

I would like to take the opportunity to remind parents to contact Student Services if there is a need to get a message to your daughter during the school day.

All students will be unable to access their phones during the school day because we ask that phones be in their lockers at this time. Please do not message or call your daughters directly during the school day. If it is urgent and/or an emergency, we ask that you call reception on 6243 4100, they will find a trusted adult that will deliver the message to your daughter and support her. If your daughter is not feeling well, she is to find her PC or House Coordinator. Parents will be contacted by the college if necessary.

If contacting a staff member, I ask that you please be patient. Most of our teaching staff are full time teachers and therefore cannot access their emails or the phone message system until, they are free to do so. They will contact you within a 48-hour period.

Updates to the calendar events, news and photos can be found on <https://merici.news> . You are also invited to follow our Facebook, Instagram or Twitter accounts.

COVID 19

As previously communicated to families ([here](#)), please be mindful of current COVID restrictions as we continue to adapt to living with the COVID-19 pandemic. Catholic Education, in consultation with ACT Health, have asked schools to observe the following requirements to keep our community safe:

- When permitted on campus, parents and visitors to our schools are required to 'check-in' using the Check in CBR app when entering the school. These QR codes will be placed in prominent locations in the front office. Please also remember to sign in following the standard visitor process.
- Any person aged 12 years or older must wear a face mask in indoor settings (other than a place of residence). A person is not required to wear a face mask if they have a physical or mental health illness or condition, or disability, which makes wearing a face mask detrimental to their condition. For more information see [Face masks requirements](#).
- Visitors, parents/carers and staff are asked to maintain physical distancing requirements (1.5 metres).
- We ask that you keep your daughter at home if they are unwell. If your daughter presents to First Aid with illness, we will make contact and ask that you collect your daughter as soon as possible. This will also ensure that staff and other students remain well.
- Staff will also be reminding children to sanitise their hands and maintain appropriate hygiene throughout the school day.
- There are some restrictions on the number of visitors that can be accommodated in school halls. Gatherings will be monitored accordingly.

I look forward to seeing you all at upcoming school events such as our Information Evenings, International Women's Day event and the Community Soiree, COVID willing. Take care and stay safe.

With kind regards



Anna Masters
Principal