



Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome all to the commencement of the 2023 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 2023.

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 *Communitas*. This Latin word means “community”. The symbols that will be important this year are the well and loaves and fishes. Red will be our colour, representing connection, courage and compassion. The notion of community is central to our faith and tradition, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.” 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Celebrating our 2022 Achievements

Congratulations to our Year 12 Class of 2022 for their exceptional academic achievements.

102 students received their Year 12 ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. 61 students completed a Tertiary Package and received an ATAR. 41 students completed Accredited Packages, which included Vocational qualifications.

Our highest ATAR was **99.35**. Our median ATAR was 82.15.

In this cohort of 102 students, we had 50 VET certificates awarded to students, which is well above the average across ACT colleges.

2022 results:

- Median ATAR achieved - 82.15
- 16% of students achieved an ATAR over 95
- 29% of students achieved an ATAR over 90
- 54% of students achieved an ATAR over 80
- 98% of students achieved an ATAR over 60

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 was sent out and we look forward to receiving their responses. Please register to be a member of our Alumni by sending an email to Ros Parisi at ros.parisi@merici.act.edu.au.

MERICI COLLEGE

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Staffing

We welcome the following staff members for 2023:

- Deputy Principal Development: Nicola McLennan
- Head of Mission and Community: Veronica Harrold-Carter
- Academic Coordinator: Bianca Porcheddu
- Literacy Coordinator: Nicole Commins
- HPE Coordinator: Kylie Olsthoorn
- RE Teacher & Indigenous Officer: Alyssa Markmann
- Languages Teacher: Tina Rodriguez
- Languages Teacher: Giuseppe Battaglia
- Hospitality: Jasmine Pitts
- Maths: Mick Lewthwaite
- Science: Katherine Morris
- Science: Victoria Goss
- Inclusive Education: Jo Drummond
- Inclusive Education: Diana Cruz
- Inclusive Education: Tatiana Manna
- Inclusive Education: Callan Martin
- Administration Support: Yvonne Morris
- Uniform Shop Assistant: Jane Rosewarne
- School Counsellor: Chelsea Kent

Current Staff - Changes

- Sarah Cusack – transfer from Inclusive Education to Student Services Administration Officer
- Kathryn White - 12 months leave
- Amy Connellan - 12 months leave
- Oliver Barlow – 12 months leave
- Fabrice Boone – 12 months leave

Uniform expectations: Wear our uniform with pride!

Our Merici uniform is highly recognisable in the Canberra community and a symbol of our collective identity. Our smart blazers and navy uniform are highly regarded by members of the Canberra community, and they know a Merici Student when they see one. Every Merici Student is an ambassador for our College and there is an expectation that uniforms will be worn in a responsible and respectful manner, to the highest standard of presentation.

Please familiarise yourselves with the uniform guidelines and support the College in its efforts to ensure the uniform is worn with pride and respect, <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/my-merici/resources/uniforms>. We will be working closely with students and families to follow up on any uniform concerns to reinforce our belief that the uniform helps create a sense of belonging and contributes to our strong school spirit.

Communication and Use of Mobile Phones

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. 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, the use of mobile phones on the school site, during school hours is as follows:

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, students 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, for example 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.

Parents are asked to contact Student Services if there is a need to get a message to your daughter during the school day. 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 go to Student Services where 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.

Important Communications re: Senior Student Arrangements and Medication Administration

Every member of our community wants to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all. Two important letters are being sent with this letter. One addresses arrangements for senior student use of study sessions, presence on site and driving. The other outlines our approach to medical administration and the documentation required from parents and carers by the College if appropriate. Please read them carefully.

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.

I look forward to seeing you all at upcoming school events such as our Information Evenings, International Women's Day event and St Angela Merici Feast Day celebrations. Once again, welcome to the 2023 academic year.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Masters". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and larger than the others.

Anna Masters
Principal

For your information, please find below information on the College's Annual Improvement Plan, as aligned to the College's Strategic Plan.

Annual Improvement Plan 2023

As part of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, the Annual Improvement Plan focuses solely on the goals and tasks allocated and/or created for 2023. 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



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.

