Covenant College

CHRISTIAN LEARNING FOR LIFE

Annual Report 2022



Contents

Message from the College Principal	**05**
Professional Engagement	**12**
Staff Retention	12
Staff Qualifications	12
Professional Development & Staff Appraisals	12
Student Outcomes	**13**
Student Attendance	13
Student Retention Rate	13
National Benchmarks	**14**
NAPLAN Results	14
Senior Secondary Outcomes	**14**
VCE Achievements	14
Where did our 2022 Year 12 students go?	15
Income Sources	**16**
Expenditures Breakdown	**17**
Students Connecting Globally	**18**
Covenant Christian Academy Update	18
Bushikori Update	19



Covenant College strives to be a vibrant Christ-Centred community where parents and staff serve in partnership to nurture in each child a passion for learning and an uncompromising desire to live according to God's Word.



Message from the College Principal

By Sue Cox

Covenant College is governed by the Geelong Christian Education Association, consisting of both parent and non-parent members who are actively involved in a variety of Christian churches. The Association elects and votes for members of the Association to form a Board. The College Board are charged to act on behalf of the Association to provide governance, direction and guidance to the College, and to provide an authentic Biblically-based Christ-centred education to students in the Geelong and surrounding areas. The Board were able to meet in person during 2022, which was a welcome change from the previous two years. The 2022 elected Board members consisted of Gary Plumridge (Board Chairman), James Kingsland (Board Vice-Chairman), Reyson Royo (Treasurer), Andrew Thierry, Glen Munday, Sally Baird, Leanne Johnson, Jarrod Cairncross and José Rodriguez-López. At the end of June, Gary's wife (and past staff member) Carolyn, passed away after weeks of intense sickness. Carolyn had been a wonderful supporter of the College and had also been my PA for three years. Due to Carolyn's sickness and very sad passing, Gary resigned from his position on the Board. Gary was thanked for the work that he had done over the previous three years and the very positive support he had given to the Board, Principal, staff and families.

Following Gary's resignation and the Association Annual General Meeting in May, the College Board members consisted of Andrew Thierry (Board Chairman), Glen Munday (Board Vice-Chairman, Staffing & Child Safe Compliance Representative), Reyson Royo (Treasurer), Leanne Johnson (Correspondence Secretary), Sally Baird (Association Membership Representative), José Rodriguez-López (Promotions & Marketing), and Jarrod Cairncross (Trades Skills Representative). One of the main tasks undertaken by the Board this year was the search for a new Principal for 2023, which they achieved with the help of Christian Education National [CEN]. Joshua McEwen, our Vice-Principal for the last 9 years, was appointed our new Principal from 2023.

As with previous years, all new staff participated in a professional development evening at school where they were privileged to have two of our school fathers lead them through the evening – Dr Murray Capill and Dr Phillip Scheepers. During the evening the staff were introduced to the importance of Christian Education, what it means, and how it underpins all that we do at Covenant. All staff participated in upskilling across the course of the year, either in their field of teaching or support, and in the understanding of Christian Education. A diverse range of professional development courses were undertaken, ranging from mental health, student wellbeing and first-aid training through to tractor maintenance, inclusive learning and curriculum development.

Religious freedom and exemptions were still on the political agenda in 2022, with a push to legislate that all Christian schools have an open employment strategy. We will continue to lend our voice, and that of our parents, to maintaining our ability to hold onto our freedom of speech, the freedom to teach from our Biblical Basis statement to shape the educational practice of the College based on these core beliefs, and our ability to employ those who can adhere to, support and advance these practices.

Although COVID-19 did not impact us as a College with shutdowns, mask mandates were still in place for bus travel and inside spaces. Students and staff were required to do a RAT (Rapid Antigen Test) prior to attending school two or three times a week to test for COVID-19 during Terms 1 and 2. If the test was positive, they were required to isolate at home for seven days and contact both the school and Department of Health. Over the course of the year these instructions changed to shorter periods of isolation and the use of RATs only when people were symptomatic. On any given day there were a number of students and staff unable to attend the College. Many students continued to be impacted by the lack of 'normal' schooling. Over the past two years students have missed significant amounts of onsite schooling which has had, in some cases, a detrimental effect on their learning and wellbeing. Our teaching, education support and pastoral care staff have worked hard to help students reassimilate back into full-time onsite classes and reinforce the learning and wellbeing of all students.





In contrast to the previous few years, many activities were able to go ahead in 2022:

- Middle School Beach Day
- Year 9 Community Service
- Mother's and Father's Day stalls
- 2022 Premiers' Reading Challenge
- Year 8 Medieval Day
- Book Week Dress-Up Celebration
- Book Fair and many exciting activities across the year hosted in the Library by the Library staff
- School Photos
- NAPLAN
- Final Years Information Evening
- Year 4 Mill Valley Camp
- Year 8 Pax Hill Camp
- Combined Bands Workshop at St Joseph's College
- Middle School Wonder Week and Science Week
- Music Recitals
- Junior School 'Rhyme Crime' mission
- Robotics
- Hosting AIIU Japanese students
- Little Learners Love Learning (Foundation Class)
- TerraCycle/Colgate Community Garden Challenge (Grand Prize winners – 3rd place!)
- Kinder Buddies Commonwealth Games
- GAT (General Achievement Test)
- Junior School Concert
- 2012 Graduates reunion
- Grandparents and special older friends' day
- Graduations
- Open Days
- Welcoming new parents and students at our Orientation Day





Additionally, many sporting competitions were able to recommence in 2022:

- School Swimming Carnival
- GISSA: Tennis, Cricket, Soccer, Badminton, Senior Girls AFL, Golf, Cross Country, and Nitro Athletics
- CSEN: Primary and Secondary Swimming Championships, Western Rally Day, Basketball, Primary/Secondary Athletics, Cross Country Championship
- Victorian High School Ultimate Frisbee Championships
- Cross Country and Athletics Carnival
- Grade 5/6 Corio District Winter Lightning Premiership
- Athletics Championship



Finally, many camps and excursions took place, and so many more activities that enhanced our students' learning across the school.

Covenant College's LOTE program continues to be valued by students and staff alike. Junior School students are taught AUSLAN, and Middle School students have the opportunity to learn 4 different languages (one language per year) from a choice of AUSLAN, Afrikaans, French, Hebrew, Indonesian, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

2022 was a year to celebrate the hard work of Middle and Senior School teacher Emily McDowell - her vision, passion, and ability to bring together a cast and crew to present and perform the musical "Aladdin". A huge thank you to all those involved, the cast and crew were fantastic. Those fortunate to attend one of the performances were amazed at the talent both on and off stage.

The combined Art and Design Show and Music Recital was once again held in the totally transformed MPC, and the doors were opened for three days to welcome the many who came to see and enjoy the works and creativity of our students. While we made the most of technology and held these shows virtually in the two years prior, they couldn't compare to the experience of seeing these shows in person – we have very talented students and staff.











It was wonderful to have full attendance at our Investiture Service at the start of the year as we announced and invested our 2022 Student Leadership Team:

School Captains:

Reuben Feldman and Ella Baxter

Senior School Vice Captains:

Ellen Holman and Liam Sacco

Senior School Student Leaders:

Antonique Anello, Kendra Ball, Grace Clarke, Esther Harrisson, Jessica Patten, Elizmarie Pretorius, Jireh Vicary

Middle School Captain:

Luca Gall

Middle School Class Captains:

Year 8 - Augustine Johnson, Joanna Day, Naomi Willey

Year 7 - Amelia Calman, Katelyn White, Caleb Currie

Year 6 - Heidi Feldman, Savannah White

Year 5 - Jesse Barry, Sam Joseph

Senior and Middle School House Captains:

Livingstone Lions - Jorja Caruso, Roddy French

Wilberforce Whales - Molly Kent, Solomon Kent

Ten Boom Tigers - Lily Middleton, Zack Beasley

Mueller Mammoths - Hannah Williams, William Fletcher

Junior School Captains:

Micah Usman, Lachy Moore, Katie Rolley, Fletcher Popping





We welcomed a number of new and returning staff for 2022:

Ed Sharpe – JS & MS Teacher/Education Support

Tamara Fruin – JS Teacher

Jared Catchpoole – JS Sport & SS Teacher

Nathanael Stubbings – MS & SS Teacher

Philomena Nguyen – MS & SS Teacher

James Punton – MS Sport Teacher/Tutoring Program

Jemima Knox – Year 9 Teacher

Vanessa Rees – Year 7 Teacher

Tina Tiarua – Year 2 Teacher

Kristy Cook – Music Teacher

Jasmine McKnight – Product Design & Technology Teacher

Jaime Kenny – VCAL Teacher/Tutoring Program

Peter Lamprecht – VCE Coordinator

Amber Cox – Careers Counsellor (returning from maternity leave)

Annie Boseley – Tutoring Program

Kathy Vale – Tutoring Program

Nathan Licandro – Education Support

Annaliese Tesdorpf – Education Support

Sarah-Jane Deckert – Education Support

Kaye Mitchell – Education Support

Kelley Wright – Education Support

Michelle Simpson – Education Support

Jackson Sleep – Education Support

Karen Morgan – Education Support

Sarah Steel – Kindergarten Assistant

Annie Dunn – Kindergarten Assistant

Maryleen Venema – Administration

Vivian Tapic – Food Services

Anthony Bennett – Properties & Transport

Tony Humm – Properties

We also said farewell to some of our excellent staff during the year and at the end of the year, all of whom were greatly valued staff members who continue to be missed:

Jonathan Feldman, Amy Whitworth, Jenni Arton-Powell, Damien Ganley, George Terhorst, Karen Horman, Nathan Plumridge, Ian Zutt, Laura-Beth Filipovski, Nathan Licandro, Dave Murphy, Jenny Rowe, Trudie Kirk, Jodie Saunders, Grace Newnham, Patricia Day, Pieter Stok, Joanna Shirley, Jaime Kenny, Sarah Steel and Stephen Scott.

In September 2021, we were informed that we had been successful in obtaining a Victorian Government Grant to complete the Middle School: three extra classrooms, offices and toilet facilities. The grant also extended to building the TEP (Tailored Education Program) building, a tailor-made facility designed to meet the unique needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or similar learning profiles, who otherwise find mainstream education complex, difficult and overwhelming. The buildings began alongside the completion of the upgrade to the Fire Ring Mains and sewerage holding tanks and pipes, and electrical, data and water upgrade. Many meetings were held with the builder, architect, Risk and Operations Manager, Grounds and Maintenance Manager, Finance Manager, Vice-Principal and Principal, all working together to make these buildings suitable for our students. They were to be ready for occupation at the beginning of 2023. Our thanks to our builder Brett De Boer and his team and our architect Leigh Dicker, for both delivering an excellent project that will serve our students for many years to come. Alongside these major projects, Brett also installed two new exit doors into the MPC and removed the internal wall in the staff room to add extra space for our growing staff.

Our support for other schools continues with many of our staff and Junior School students supporting Joshua Primary School, part of Bushikori in Uganda. We also continue to have a wonderful relationship with Covenant Christian Academy (CCA) in Rizal, Philippines. Unfortunately, we were once again unable to visit CCA this year due to their COVID-19 restrictions. We were able to continue to support the school, however, through sponsorship of students and staff through various fundraising activities such as the Year 10 Mission Group and the Year 5 Bake Sale. Both were able to raise considerable funds during the year. CCA continues to reach out to their community offering Bible-based education, love and care.







Our Trades Skills Centre (TSC) continued to grow in numbers, with five weekly classes attended by over 50 students coming from both Covenant College and more than a dozen other local schools. The TSC offers Certificate II in Horticulture, Agriculture and Animal Studies. Practical skills, which are a highlight for the students, include grooming animals; caring for chickens, bees, sheep and cattle; driving the tractor; OHS; soil and garden establishment, as well as many and varied excursions to farms, animal shelters, vet clinics, the Geelong Animal Welfare Society (GAWS), Werribee Zoo, commercial horticulture facilities and many more. It was wonderful to be able to participate in excursions and have students back onsite with no interruptions.

We congratulated all of our VCE and VCAL graduands who completed their studies in 2022. Congratulations to Hannah Williams who was our DUX for 2022 with an Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank (ATAR) of 98.8. We celebrated the 2022 Graduation Dinner with our graduates and their guests, numbering around 250, who were seated in the MPC for a delicious dinner and evening spent celebrating our students and their families. Our graduating students have now gone on to pursue a number of different paths – more than half applied for further education at university, TAFE and other industry specific institutions, while others chose to enter the workforce or commence apprenticeships. All those pursuing further education were fortunate to receive a tertiary offer, with the majority choosing to commence their studies in 2023. We congratulate our graduates on persevering through two years of lockdowns and remote learning, and managing to complete their studies well despite these challenges. Our prayer for our graduating students (and indeed all of our students) is that they will know who Jesus is, what He has done for them, how much He loves them, and that they will follow Him and seek His guidance in all that they do.

Hannah Williams – Dux 2022











This report is a snapshot of some of the activities and changes during the 2022 year. Where 2020-2021 stretched us unlike anything we had encountered before, 2022 would also stretch us as we readjusted to onsite schooling with no interruptions and worked to reclaim some of what had been missed in the previous two years. Our hope is that it has made us value our relationships with each other and with Jesus Christ. When Jesus was asked which commandment is the most important of all, He replied "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength'. And the second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these". Jesus told us clearly the way we can live to honour Him (Mark 12:29-31).



Thank you

This is my last Principal's Message, and I would again like to thank our dedicated staff of 2022 who have worked in the different sections of the College: Administration, Transport, Grounds and Maintenance, Cleaning, Teaching, Community Development and Catering, Education Support, Counselling, Leadership, the Board and Association, and our volunteers. I am incredibly grateful for their work and passion for Christian Education, which is seen in whichever area they work. I would also like to thank our families for their support of the staff and the students, making it a joy and blessing as we journey together even through some tough times. I thank all of you for the privilege and joy of being your Principal for 19 years. Thank you for your prayers, friendship, and support over this time, and for the support I know you will give Joshua McEwen as he leads the school from 2023.

Ultimately, all thanks and praise go to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for His hand on Covenant College, His blessing on our staff and families, for the provision of His love and protection, and for empowering and challenging us to live according to His will – Covenant College is His school.

Sue Cox





"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

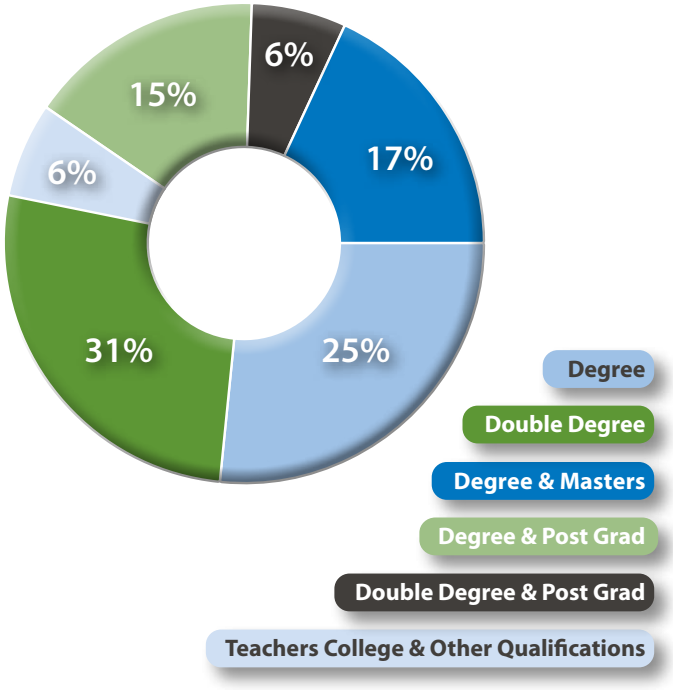
PROVERBS 22:6

Professional Engagement

Staff Retention

The continued impact of COVID-19 was felt yet again in 2022 as Covenant College both welcomed and farewelled a significantly higher percentage of staff than in previous years. We commenced the year with 15 new part-time and full-time teaching staff members, bringing our total teaching staff numbers back in line with those of 2021. By the completion of the school year, we said goodbye to 10 staff out of a total teaching staff of 83, translating to a retention rate of 88% for 2022. Much like 2021, the reasons for staff departures were varied, ranging from retirement and family leave to interstate relocation, and even overseas relocation. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff for their commitment to Christian Education, their students and Covenant College.

Staff Qualifications





Professional Development & Staff Appraisals

After the restrictions on face-to-face engagement in recent years, staff were able to enjoy a broader range of professional development opportunities in 2022 that included both off-site and online training. Covenant teaching staff attended approximately 81 days of professional development programs throughout 2022, equating to an expenditure of approximately $64,820 throughout the year or $781 per teaching staff member (note: this excludes the cost of casual relief teachers to cover classes).

Staff engaged in a wide and varied assortment of professional development opportunities, encompassing such topics as those listed below:

- Leadership, Team Culture and Communication
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Teaching Strategies and Behavioural Support
- Inclusive Learning Design
- Literacy & Writing Programs
- Trauma Response Practice
- Wilderness First Aid and Life Saving courses
- Canoeing Training and Assessment
- Exam Preparation
- VCE Study Design and Updates
- Tractor Skills and Servicing
- VET Training
- Assessment Tracking

In addition to professional development, staff at Covenant College are required to complete regular training and refresher courses in the following areas:

- First Aid and CPR
- Anaphylaxis and Allergy Management
- Asthma Management
- Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting

New staff are required to complete an induction and training program that covers such topics as occupational health and safety, privacy, student duty of care, administrative functions and school policies.

Throughout the year, all staff undergo annual appraisals. These are conducted both formally and informally with a view to encouraging staff in their work and the development of ongoing goals.

Student Outcomes

Student Attendance	**86.5%**
Student Retention	**71%**

Student Attendance

After consecutive years of remote learning and lockdowns, we welcomed the reestablishment of face-to-face classroom learning in 2022. Attendance rates across the school were slightly lower than in previous years – this was possibly due to the high incidence of fatigue and illness that was observed throughout the student body as school life resumed post-lockdown. Students from Foundation to Year 11 were in attendance approximately **86.5%** of the time in 2022. The table adjacent is the breakdown of student attendance by year level.

Student attendance is recorded in line with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) minimum standards. In the event that a child will be absent from school, an explanation is required from the parent/guardian along with information regarding the nature and duration of the absence. This is preferably done prior to commencement of the school day via one of the following methods:

- Parent Portal app
- RollCall app (for bus travellers)
- SMS or phone call
- email to Student Reception and/or homeroom teacher
- written note in the school diary



Student Retention Rate

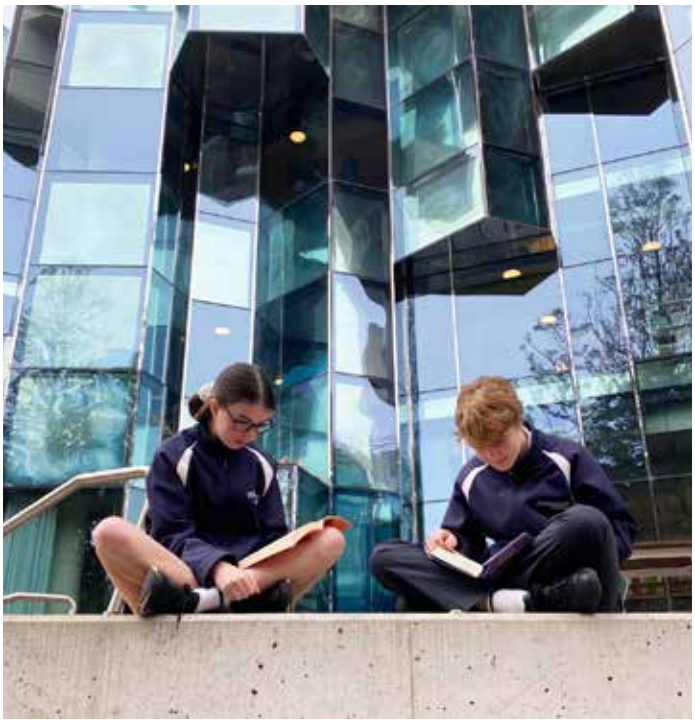
The student retention rate is calculated on the number of Year 9 students who continue their studies at Covenant College through to graduation in Year 12. Of the 62 students who formed the Year 9 cohort in 2019, 44 of these went on to graduate from Covenant College in 2022. This represents a retention rate of 71%.

Average Student Attendance by Year Level

Year	%
Foundation	89.2
Year 1	86.8
Year 2	88.4
Year 3	87.6
Year 4	88.5
Year 5	85.4
Year 6	85.0
Year 7	88.0
Year 8	84.9
Year 9	86.0
Year 10	83.8
Year 11	84.3
Average Across All Year Levels	**86.5%**

Management of student non-attendance

If a student is marked with an unexplained absence at morning homeroom, an SMS is sent to the parent/guardian informing them of the absence and requesting them to contact the school. In the event of long term, unexplained absences, the Head of School will follow up directly with the family.



National Benchmarks

Each year, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 participate in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), administered by the Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority (VCAA). These tests provide an indication of how well students are developing in the areas of Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy, relative to the national minimum standards. While the results give a broad picture of overall aptitude, the data is impacted by factors such as class size, changes in class cohorts from year to year, and any students exempt from testing (as these students are required to be included in the data as not meeting the benchmarks).

In 2020, the decision was made by Education Ministers to cancel NAPLAN testing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the table below reflects the school's NAPLAN results from the years 2019, 2021 and 2022.

NAPLAN Results

Percentage (%) of students achieving at or above minimum standards:

		2019	2021	2022
Year 3	Reading	98	95	100
	Writing	100	100	98
	Spelling	93	100	94
	Grammar & Punctuation	98	100	98
	Numeracy	97	100	98
Year 5	Reading	100	98	97
	Writing	97	100	91
	Spelling	95	94	97
	Grammar & Punctuation	95	94	100
	Numeracy	100	100	100
Year 7	Reading	100	100	97
	Writing	99	98	95
	Spelling	98	97	97
	Grammar & Punctuation	94	91	97
	Numeracy	98	98	95
Year 9	Reading	97	100	93
	Writing	91	95	87
	Spelling	96	95	91
	Grammar & Punctuation	91	95	93
	Numeracy	100	100	98



Senior Secondary Outcomes

VCE Achievements

- 48 Covenant College students completed their VCE and VCAL in 2022.
- Our Dux of 2022 achieved an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Ranking) score of **98.8**
- Our median ATAR score for all students was **62.72**
- **11.53%** of students achieved an ATAR score above 90
- **19.61%** of students achieved an ATAR score above 80
- Four Year 12 students achieved a total of 7 study scores of 40 or higher in English, Psychology, Further Mathematics and Studio Arts.
- Two additional students in Year 11 who completed VCE Studio Arts each received a study score above 40
- **100%** of our VCE students who applied for higher education courses received an offer.
- **92.85%** of these students received a first round offer; **17.85%** received a second round offer; **21.42%** received a third round offer.
- 28 students applied to a Victorian Tertiary or Vocational Institution, with 4 choosing to defer their studies

Where did our 2022 Year 12 students go?

Tertiary Institutions	#	%
TAFE	7	25.0
Deakin University/Deakin College	6	21.4
Bible College	3	10.7
University of Melbourne	2	7.1
Victoria University	2	7.1
Academy of Interactive Technology	1	3.6
Australian Catholic University	1	3.6
Collarts (Australian College of the Arts)	1	3.6
JMC Academy	1	3.6
La Trobe University	1	3.6
Monash University	1	3.6
RMIT	1	3.6
Swinburne University	1	3.6
Total	**28**	**100%**

Career Pathways	#	%
University	18	37.5
Tafe/Vocational Study	10	20.8
Employment	5	10.4
Other/Unknown	15	31.3
Total	**51**	**100%**

Some of the career pathways that our Year 12 students are pursuing include:

- Arts
- Audio Engineering & Entertainment Management
- Bible College
- Biological Sciences
- Biomedical Science
- Building Apprenticeship
- Certificate IV Fitness
- Commerce
- Creative Arts
- Criminal Justice & Criminology
- Education (Primary & Secondary)
- Electrical Apprenticeship
- Engineering
- Exercise & Sports Science
- Fabrication Apprenticeship
- Film and Television Production
- Game Design
- Nursing
- Paramedicine
- Science
- Screen & Media
- Youth Work & Criminal Justice



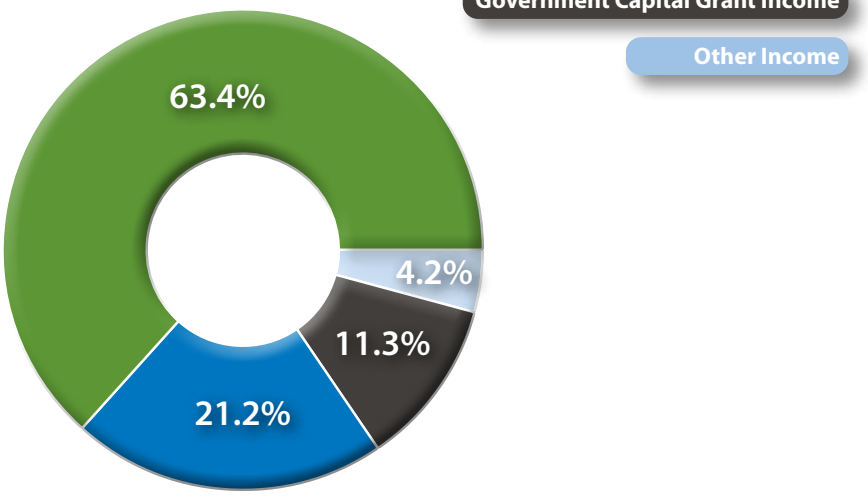
Income Sources

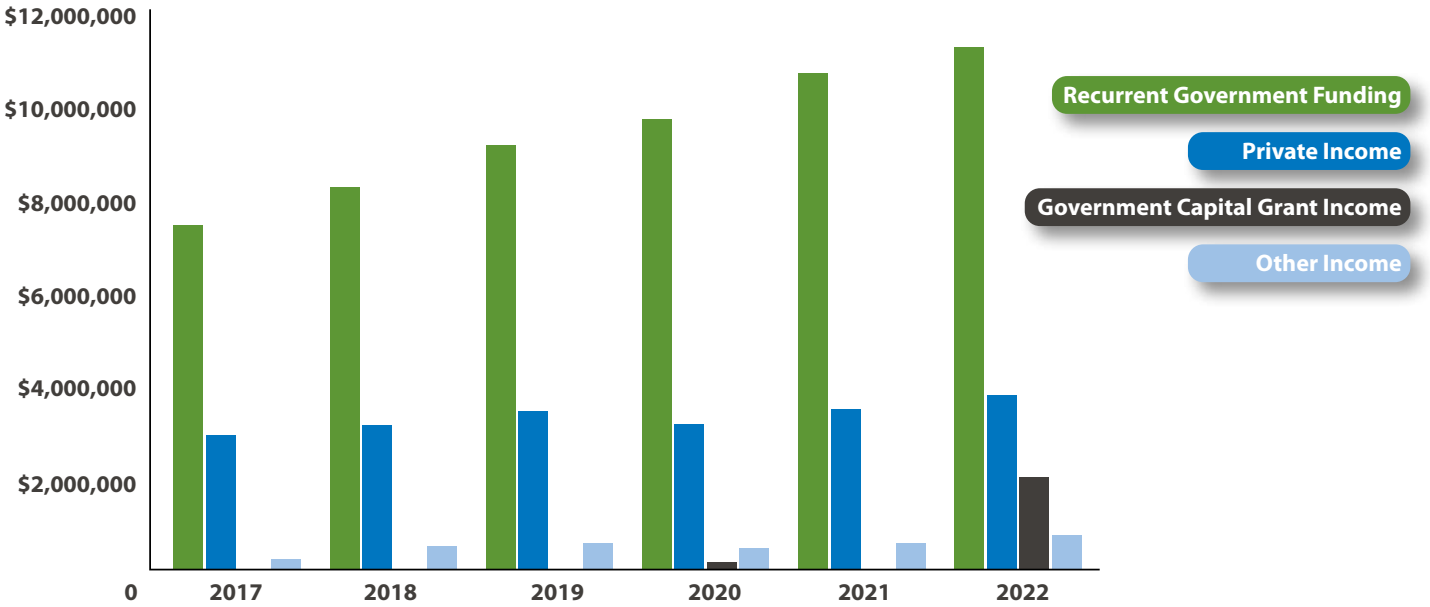
Income Sources 2017 – 2022

	Recurrent Government Funding	Private Income	Government Capital Grant Income	Other Income
2017	$7,355,431	$2,866,011	-	$489,925
2018	$8,166,717	$3,095,832	-	$559,251
2019	$9,075,329	$3,388,530	-	$673,840
2020	$9,624,861	$3,115,189	$450,000	$540,655
2021	$10,605,284	$3,436,055	-	$709,693
2022	$11,161,739	$3,723,189	$1,981,695	$735,879





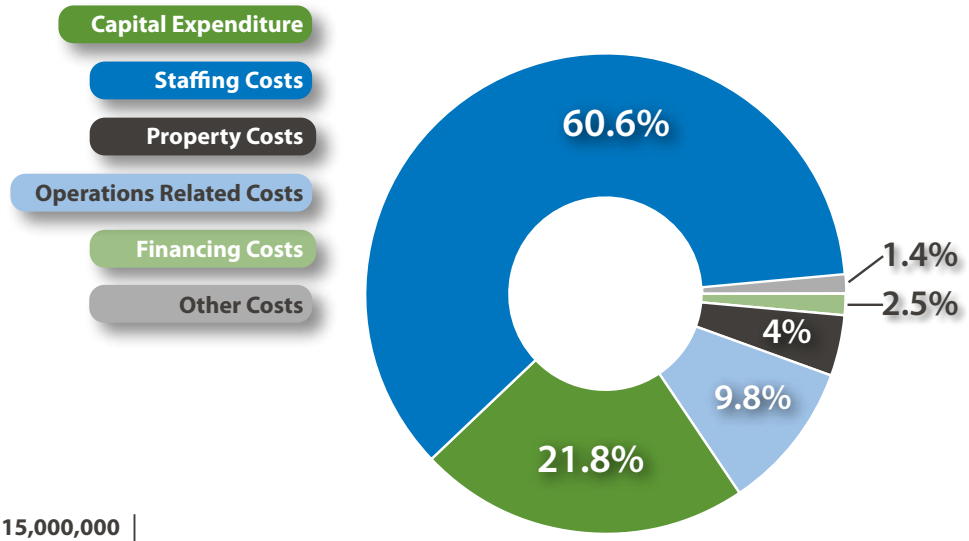


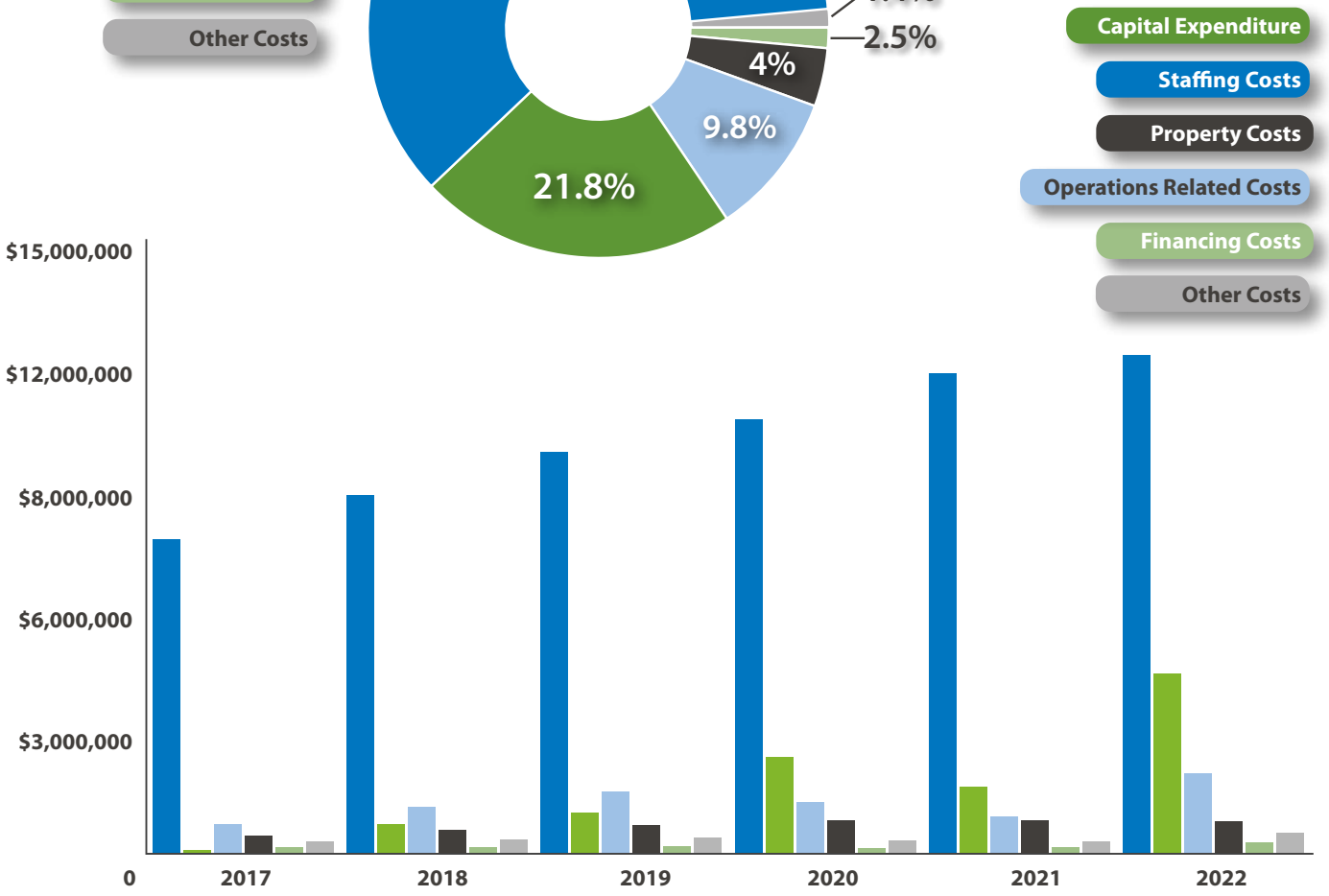


Expenditures Breakdown

Expenditures 2017 - 2022

	Staffing Costs	Capital Expenditure	Operations Related Costs	Property Costs	Financing Costs	Other Costs
2017	$7,664,964	$93,556	$715,703	$426,866	$155,259	$294,389
2018	$8,747,600	$723,234	$1,139,390	$566,416	$154,194	$341,356
2019	$9,796,999	$1,003,492	$1,513,478	$695,794	$170,177	$378,183
2020	$10,592,108	$2,347,815	$1,248,751	$807,589	$117,707	$311,622
2021	$11,714,621	$1,618,321	$902,741	$798,048	$148,329	$281,618
2022	$12,152,585	$4,383,502	$1,965,859	$792,979	$272,442	$501,567





Students Connecting Globally

Covenant Christian Academy Update

By Ellen P. Visey









Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the name of Jesus. On behalf of CCA, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks for your support and trust for helping us build a strong Christian foundation program. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our mission and believing in our work. We look forward to the next school year and onwards of partnership with you. May the Lord be blessed through our partnership.

Throughout the year, Covenant Christian Academy of Rizal, Laguna, showcased a diverse range of activities. In August, they focused on essential tasks like School Maintenance and Parent Orientation. The school year began with an Ocular Inspection and United Nations Day Celebration.

October brought various festivities, including World Teachers' Day, Student Council Elections, and Quarterly Recognition. A Phonetics Seminar engaged parents, promoting active involvement.

December emphasized personal growth with a Personality Development Workshop, alongside Christmas Presentation and a Year-End Party for students and staff.

January featured creative expression through Poem Recitation and Storytelling contests.

In February, the school celebrated its 10th Anniversary, a momentous occasion.

Sports enthusiasts had their share of excitement with Basketball and Volleyball Clinics, along with the Spelling Bee, Quiz Bowl, and Art Contest. The Fun Run 2023 promoted a healthy lifestyle while the Fundraising Raffle Draw contributed to the school's initiatives. A Parade and Sports Festival added to the jubilation.

March prioritized safety with Fire and Earthquake Drills.

April included Department of Education Ocular Inspection, Enhanced Basic Education Information System Validation, and Lapprisada Interschool Spelling Bee.

June ended the year with an adventurous Overnight Camping at the CCA annex, highlighting their dedication to education, development, and community building.

The 10th-anniversary celebrations were particularly special, underscoring the school's journey and highlighting the crucial support from Covenant College, which played a vital role in overcoming pandemic challenges and sustaining the institution.

Thank you and God bless.

In Christ,
Ellen P. Visey
Principal

Bushikori Update

By Pamela Ferrar







Covenant College has been faithfully supporting Bushikori for over 20 years - we thank God for this wonderful connection that has made such a difference to so many in Uganda. Not only have students been sponsored individually by staff members, but teaching staff have donated part of their salaries to fund the wages of the teachers at Joshua Primary School (JPS) since its inception in 2001.

The Bushikori Christian Centre (BCC) is a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) situated a few kilometres from the city of Mbale in Eastern Uganda. Their mission: "to fulfil the great Commission of Jesus Christ in word and deed by empowering orphans, vulnerable children, widows and needy persons in different communities".

The foundation and practice of BCC is Christian, as evidenced by the staff meetings held each morning for prayer and worship. There is a weekly gathering for the Joshua Primary School (JPS) students where they worship together and learn from the Bible - several staff members volunteer their time to organise this event. Prayer undergirds all activities both in Uganda and in Australia, God's ongoing blessing of this work and His provision is a witness for all involved, not least in the long-term involvement and partnership with Covenant College.

The regular donations from Covenant College teaching staff offer wage security for the JPS teachers and secure employment, and ensure that well qualified and reliable teachers can be employed. Secure employment and regular salaries are not always available in public schools in Uganda. Many of the original staff donors from Covenant College are no longer working at the school, and our prayer is that new staff members may also wish to continue this valuable tradition that is changing lives in Uganda.

In 2020, under the auspices of the School Board, a new and exciting partnership with Covenant College was agreed upon based on Proverbs 22:6: 'Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.' This is the Christian Education Training Agreement (CET) which is an expression of Covenant College's vision for Christian Education. The donation of AUD $5,000 is used to sponsor 4 students at JPS at $360 per child per annum. The remaining AUD $3,600 goes towards spreading the Word of God through the development of Christian Education, both at JPS and amongst the wider cohort of secondary and tertiary/vocational students sponsored by BCC. Secondary-aged students attend schools chosen for the quality of their education and values in the vicinity of Mbale, as there is no secondary school at BCC.

The Christian Education weekly meetings are funded by this donation, as are conferences such as the Children's Conference 2022. The theme for this conference was drawn from Psalm 119:9: 'How can young people keep their way pure?' Age-specific activities were held with teaching not only on the Bible, but also around important issues for the young including good hygiene, abstinence, leadership skills, and encouragement to worship in a church community to develop their practice as Christians and their walk with God. A seminar is held each year for the students from primary, secondary and tertiary/vocational levels - the students generally have a great time worshipping God, learning and sharing, and enjoying good food and a soft drink!

The Australian Support Committee (ASC) has been supporting BCC Uganda in a partnership that in 2024 will celebrate 30 years. Members live in the Greater Geelong area, all Christians from various denominations and all volunteers. To see God's provision for the poor and needy is a great witness and encouragement for us all, not least from the partnership with Covenant College and the wonderful contribution that this institution makes for the people of BCC. We look forward to our continuing connection with Covenant College and the blessings this partnership brings.

Pamela Ferrar
Child Sponsorship Coordinator

Australian Support Committee
Bushikori Christian Centre
sponsorship@bushikori.org.au
www.bushikori.org.au



105 CREAMERY ROAD, BELL POST HILL. VICTORIA 3215. P 03 5278 5122
OPERATED BY: GEELONG CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION A.B.N. 24 006 071 110

Covenant College
'Christian Learning For Life'

covenant.vic.edu.au