



ANGLICAN
BOARD of
EDUCATION
SOUTHERN AFRICA

Report of the CEO to the Anglican Board of Education

Date: 10th November 2016

The Anglican Board of Education continues to make progress in a number of strategic areas.

Support for Anglican Schools

In terms of support for the present Anglican schools, the formulation of the poster, "Signs of God's Presence" indicating the distinctive characteristics of an Anglican Church school, together with the "Anglican Association Charter", have formed the foundation of extensive and valuable discussions in Natal, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and the Cape. In particular, a significant milestone in the development and identity of the Anglican Board of Education was the meeting in Gauteng. This was attended by 40 people, including heads, chaplains, some governors and the four bishops of the four Gauteng Diocese, indicating growing levels of support for the work of ABESA.

The Anglican Board has been working extensively with Chaplains. As the CEO, I attended the chaplains' conference and I am working with several teachers and chaplains in the development of a religious education framework. Several meetings have already been held in this regard, with ongoing work planned for the future. I have also continued to visit schools and build relationships with heads / principals of Anglican schools. I have played several roles in these visits, from mentoring and consulting to simply being a listening ear. I attended the Anglican Schools Association conference at Bishopscourt / Herschel and spoke about the work of ABESA. This meeting, of heads of Anglican schools, was graciously hosted by Mrs Lungi Makgoba. We enjoyed a wonderful service of worship at Herschel, followed by an excellent panel on the issues of racism in our schools lead by Ms Nomfundo Walaza. This deepened the discussion on racism in our schools at the public AGM in Gauteng in June, where presentations had been made by Mr Moeletsi Mbeki, Bishop Steve Moreo and Ms Deanne King.

I think that there is a growing sense of identity among our schools, of belonging to a community of Anglican schools which share common values and interests. There is also a growing sense of being able to support each other. This development of a community identity is becoming attractive as a formal body to which to belong, and the Sparrow Schools in Johannesburg have formally asked the Bishop that they should become an Anglican school and join ABESA. The Sparrow Schools, run by Mrs Jackie Gallagher, are a subsidized group of remedial schools, made up of a primary and a secondary school, and a FET College.

In October, ABESA in partnership with St John's College, ran the first conference on the subject of "community partnerships". Under discussion was community social responsibility. The 35 delegates who attended from around the country found the experience very valuable, and the keynote address by Mrs Margie Keeton was outstanding. A full report of the conference will be distributed to all Anglican schools.

Galvanize involvement in education by the Church

The second strategic aim of ABESA is to galvanize the church to be engaged in local government education. In this light, I attended the Provincial Synod in September where a report from ABESA was tabled. The role of ABESA was publically acknowledged on several occasions. At the Provincial Synod the Bishops approved the appointment of the new board for a further period of three years. I have deliberately sought to engage with the bishops around the role of the church in education. I have been well received, for example by St Mark's College in Jane Furse, where I have worked with Bishop Martin. I believe this is a wonderful model of how an Anglican school funded by the government can claim its Anglican identity and use this to raise the bar in terms of educational excellence. Other pleasing progress is that the SGB's of the two schools, i.e. the St Mark's Primary School and the St Mark's High School, as well as the leadership of the hostels and the Bishop, have committed themselves to funding an independent Rector for all the educational institutions on the Jane Furse property. This person, who will need to have good educational experience, will have the opportunity to lead and mentor four schools, and should be in place at the beginning of next year.

I also had the opportunity to address the Anglicans Ablaze Conference in Cape Town. This is an Anglican initiative to grow the Church, and was attended by 1500 delegates from around the country. In the workshop after the address many exciting ideas were generated as to how the church could be engaged in education.

Grow new schools

The third strategic aim is to grow new schools. In this area, there are several schools that have indicated an interest in joining ABESA. However, they need to be willing to accept the "Signs of God's Presence" and the Anglican Association Charter as a basis for joining. ABESA is happy to work with them and include them in discussions but delay joining until such time that they are ready to accept the authority of the church. St Augustine's in Nqutu, Diocese of Zululand, and St Paul's Diocese of the Highveld, continue to work towards establishing themselves as new Anglican Schools. The organization "Love Must Act, led by Bishop Stacy Sauls who is also the funder of the Holy Cross school outside Grahamstown, is keen to work in partnership with us to grow new schools. He will give a short presentation at the Board meeting on 10th November. ABESA is working towards 'claiming back' historic Anglican schools so that they can regain their Anglican identity.

Finance

Financially we have gained more support from schools through their contributions this year – approximately five additional schools have contributed. We continue to receive a small amount from the Provincial Anglican Church of about R25000. The CEO applied for funding from Nedbank and received R50 000 as a starter donation, with an invitation to continue to build a relationship. Although the funding has been very tight we have been able to keep in the black till the end of the year, although we had to agree to stop funding the Cape Secretary from October. Finances and a budget are set out for discussion in a separate document. It would be wise to employ someone in Gauteng to raise funds for us and to pay her/him a percentage based on the amount raised.

In conclusion and on reflection it has been a very good year for ABESA. There is a growing maturity to the organization and we are more widely recognized by the church and schools as playing an important role. I end by quoting Father Gradwell Fredericks after our Gauteng meeting.

"In years to come we will be indebted to the foundations you are laying in very challenging and difficult times dealing with our faith and spirituality in schools."

Roger Cameron: CEO ABESA