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The
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CARE CONVERSATIONS

FORWARD
FROM

DR TINA LAMONT // Director TEC



Dear Friend,

We are basing this semester's Care Conversations on the TEC Leadership Matrix.

Leadership in Christian schools will always remain fresh, innovative and visionary when time is intentionally created to engage with the wider Christian educational community. As Christian leaders gather from their communities and unite as a wider body of leaders, camped around a vision of authentic, Christ-centred, Biblically-based education, there is always transformation of thinking and practice that results in a greater impact for kingdom service and mission. Whilst there is a place for introspection which is contemplative and also critical, if this is the only avenue for gathering there will also be a dimension of growth that is missed. Gathering then becomes crucial to Christian leaders and the

communities they lead and participate in.

We pray God's refreshment on you as you take up the opportunities to participate in the wider community of Christian leadership.

Yours in Christ,

Dr Tina Lamont

Director TEC

The Excellence Centre

Series 14:

COMMUNITY SPIRITUAL FORMATION

REFLECTION BY
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Number 9:

INTENTIONAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

One of the biggest dangers in our schools is that we will become complacent; that the pioneering spirit with which many of our schools began, will be replaced by a growing focus on efficiency and "neatness". There is no problem with either of these two things, but they are not the goal; they are part of the means.

We need to be constantly leading our communities to understand WHY we exist and WHAT we are trying to achieve. Our WHY, which gives our

communities their MEANING, is that we are seeking to proclaim Jesus Christ as preeminent over all things. This is the vision which we must constantly communicate to our communities.

Our WHERE which determines our PURPOSE is that we are seeking to equip our students to engage redemptively in every situation in which they will find themselves. This is the mission which we must also be constantly communicating.

As School Communities we then seek a multitude of ways to satisfy both of these goals. These are our methods and resources; our HOW and WHAT.

We lose our way when we focus only on the methods and resources and lose sight of our meaning and purpose.

I live close to two major winery areas in South Australia. Just about every day I see vineyards. It's a glorious sight and it reminds me of how we operate our schools.

The vineyard owner will do everything he can to produce good grapes. THAT'S THE GOAL.



The workers in the vineyard carefully tend the vines to achieve that purpose. They will ensure that the trellis upon which the vine grows does its job of supporting the vine THAT'S A MEANS.

They will prune the vines with secateurs to ensure good growth. THEY ARE TOOLS.

The Goals are clear and the means (or methods) help to achieve the goal. The

tools (or resources) are helpful in the hands of the vineyard workers.



There are many houses in the vineyard areas whose owners grow vines in their gardens. Their plan is not to produce fruit, but for the vines to be decorative. Often the trellises are magnificent, but the vines produce no fruit.

When we talk about school improvement, we do not start by trying to produce the most magnificent trellis. We must focus on producing the best fruit for the vineyard owner.

Our intention is not simply to have the best looking schools, but to have schools which exalt Christ and produce young people who engage with grace and a redemptive spirit.

So, our task as a school leader is to continue the pioneering spirit and ensure a culture that clearly knows the goals; wisely shapes the methods and thoughtfully chooses and uses the resources. That will result in intentional improvement.

Desiring school improvement together.

Brian

Brian Cox

Consultant in Leadership & Education



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- Practice Christian Community

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