31 March 2015

Dear TAS Community,

I write to you today to inform you of the TAS Board’s decision to implement full co-education in all year groups of the school from 2016. Without doubt, the decision today is the most important in the school’s recent history and comes after a number of years of analysis and planning and the stakeholder consultation process that has occurred over the past few months.

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank all who gave their feedback through the many written submissions, the questions from over 1000 attendees at 24 consultation sessions and those who responded to the survey, which was sent to over 4,500 members of our community. The Board Directors received and read in full every email, letter and question submitted during this process and the results from the survey gave quantitative responses to the questions asked.

After a full day of deliberations and consideration of consultation and survey feedback over recent weeks, the Board’s resolution to adopt co-education includes a commitment to:

1. Continue cooperation with NEGS and PLC Armidale, including the areas of:
   a) Combined classes in Years 11 and 12 under the current arrangement
   b) Joint co-curricular activities that enhance the programs of the three independent schools.

   We are open to continued dialogue and consideration of all mutually beneficial options for any co-educational future with NEGS and PLC Armidale.

2. The continued upgrade of boys’ boarding facilities concurrently with the creation of girls’ boarding facilities.

3. Ongoing resourcing and upgrading of existing school facilities which will not be affected by the introduction of co-education.

The clear majority of our stakeholders have indicated that they wish to see the school grow and prosper into the future with all the benefits for our students and families that such growth could bring. Co-education is not an end in itself, but a means by which we can enable this growth to occur. Further development and specialisation in our academic programs and greater opportunities in co-curricular, outdoor adventure and service offerings will all be possible as the school steadily expands.

The main concern raised by some stakeholders through the feedback was that the school culture and traditions would change as a result of this move. We would like to assure all in our community that the success of TAS is based on the extraordinary culture that exists, not in a vacuum of single sex education, but because throughout its history the School has had a commitment to bring out the best in its students through programs that engage and challenge them, that are delivered by dedicated professional educators who have a passion for this school and a commitment to ensure its success long into the future. This will not change.

The path from here is exciting but challenging for all at the school as the planning of projects in the transition period to co-education are completed in time for 2016. It is a time for renewed focus and energy, and for strength and unity.

You will be kept informed of progress through the school’s communication channels as planning continues over the coming months.

We look forward to you being part of this exciting next chapter for TAS.

Sebastian Hempel
Chairman

Murray Guest
Headmaster