

Looking Forward With Confidence

Change has been one of the main constructs in education during the early to middle years of this decade. Schools have had to address a range of new challenges to ensure the relevance of education both for the present and for the uncharted decades ahead. Ringwood North Primary School is in a very sound position to offer innovative learning using excellent technological facilities and forward planning and programming.

From 1990 to the present, internal modifications have been made to extend the library, establish an additional reception area in the office area and the creation of a multi-media computer centre in the lower west wing of the administration building. In 1999 the computer centre will be relocated to a classroom adjoining the library to develop a fully integrated Information Resource Centre.

Late in Term 3 1998, the school council approved cabling projects to ensure that the school continued to provide the latest in multi-media learning opportunities for all students and staff. With the Education Department's Learning Technology initiative for schools, the council was in a position to initiate cabling to all classrooms and the Information Resource Centre to provide access to the Internet and the government's VIC ONE project. This network was connected through a file server located in the Information Resource Centre office. A whole school intercom system was installed and an internal television network to deliver satellite television programs and video presentations to all classrooms, the meeting room and hall was set up. This project was completed at a cost of \$51,000.

By the close of the 1992 school year, the school's enrolment was 264. School closures occurred across the state during 1993. Norwood Primary School closed in December of that year. Fifty three students and their families were welcomed to the Ringwood North school community for the start of the 1994 school year.

The government introduced the "Schools of the Future" initiative, a program designed to introduce self management to the state system of education. A phased plan to bring schools into the program was implemented where schools were invited to express interest in this new form school management. Ringwood North submitted an expression of interest and was accepted into the associate phase. A group of 'pilot' school trialed the initiative while the Associate schools 'shadowed' developments. Ringwood North entered the program as part of the second of four phases. From the commencement of 1996 Ringwood North had Staffing Flexibility, one of only 250 schools to be granted this status. Staffing Flexibility enabled principals to have full control over the selection of all staffing needs within the school's staffing budget.

The Schools of the Future program represented a complete change to the management of schools. The state system of education had been monitored by school inspectors for over 100 years. Principals were now given authority to monitor teacher and school performance. All teachers must achieve a satisfactory annual review outcome to gain