

Leon Morrish – Speech - Official opening

Welcome to Hon. Jay Weatherill, Minister for Education, Hon. Kelly Vincent, Member of the Legislative Council, Mr. Gary Johansen, Mayor of Port Adelaide Enfield, Mr. Gino DeGennaro, DECS Chief Executive, former school leaders, distinguished guests, families, students and staff.

I have been associated with Regency Park School for the past 13 years and have been a part of many changes which have taken place - the most significant of which has been the closure of the school and the opening of Adelaide West Special Education Centre.

Regency Park School was the last school of its type to be located on the grounds of a private institution, NOVITA, formerly the Crippled Children's Association. As such there had been talk of moving the school for many years. However finding a suitable location and funding to build a new school was problematic.

In 2006, the then Minister for Education, Dr Jane Lomax-Smith announced a special building program to rejuvenate schools in 6 areas of Adelaide. This program was known as Education Works.

Participation in this program was to be determined by the school communities. A number of public community forums were held regarding the possible closure of these schools and the development of new schools.

Interested parents, staff and members of the Regency Park School Council attended these forums, listened and asked questions. Further forums were held at Regency Park School, led by Sylvia Flato, principal, and Niki Takos, assistant principal.

As a school community we considered what the opportunities might look like if we stayed at our current site and if we elected to move. Discussions and debates were vigorous, especially about moving to a new school without a swimming pool.

However, after broad consultation with the school community, in August 2008 the vote was to relocate to a new site and a new school.

Then the work REALLY began!!

We discussed what our new school would mean for our children. What would it offer, what would be the same, what could be different? What were the benefits and what were the challenges?

With the assistance of Susan Sweetman, an Education and Care brief was developed. This was a lengthy document that would guide the building design.

As a parent group, councillors were kept informed and invited to comment wherever possible. We discussed school colours, school uniform, and school name, keeping within the guidelines for each

We were delighted that our new school would be located adjacent to Ocean View College, as this meant that opportunities which did not previously exist for our students would be possible.

School councillors were welcomed by Kerry Dolman, Principal, Ocean View College and her leadership team. We toured the school and then visited our new site.

As a parent body, The Governing Council of Adelaide West Special Education Centre, is delighted with the end result.

We are especially pleased with this gym, the classrooms and the outdoor spaces,

Thanks must go to:

- Sylvia and her dedicated staff for the amount of work carried out during our move from Regency Park.
- Family, friends and carers also for their assistance during the move.
- School Council members for their continuous commitment.

Last but not least the students. It was very rewarding to see the anticipation and excitement on their faces the day we moved into our new facilities – said it all.

Thank you all and enjoy your new school.