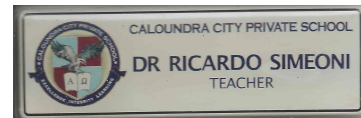


Caloundra City Private School, Pelican Waters (2016-2019)

In 2014 I completed a *Returning to Teaching in Schools* Certificate through the Australian Catholic University, since returning to the Sunshine Coast and teaching within a personalised, community-focused school environment was a potential move about which I had been giving serious thought. Accordingly, upon deciding to leave Griffith University at the end of 2015 my intention was to move directly to school teaching on the Sunshine Coast. However, an unexpected eleventh-hour Medical Physics opportunity arose within Queensland Health and I accepted a three month contract (based not too far from the Royal Brisbane Hospital). And so I temporarily returned close to my old "stomping ground".

It was nice to catch up with some past colleagues, and there were positives such as becoming familiar with new equipment operating systems, leading to my carrying out compliance testing on Ultrasound units in Cairns and a Mammography Breast Screening bus in Maryborough (as an aside, with travel and accommodation self-funded for Cairns and accommodation self-funded for Maryborough). However, the same enjoyment just was not there (in part due to the role's heavier focus on equipment/process compliance assessments) and although my short-term contract was extended at the commencement of 2016, shortly after I was offered a teaching position at Caloundra City Private School (CCPS) which I accepted.

From the perspective of teaching great students, this period of teaching at Pelican Waters on the Sunshine Coast represents another enjoyable time and privilege. Because CCPS at the time was a relatively small school with only approximately 300 students from primary and secondary combined, class sizes were relatively small in my senior classes (e.g., 3 to 5 students within Mathematics C and only slightly more in Physics and Mathematics B). The class sizing was a wonderful contrast to previous teaching, particularly within academia where at one stage there was approximately 600 students in my Foundation year lectures. With the small student numbers at CCPS came a beautiful Family community (e.g., parents would attend the valedictory graduation dinner/dance of year 12 students and I never had any unpleasant interactions with parents during my 4 years at the school).



When I commenced full-time teaching as the sole Physics, Mathematics B and Mathematics C teacher for years 11 and 12 (and also with a junior Mathematics class), the position presented a significant challenge, with my Sister (a dedicated and very experienced teacher for her entire career) wisely warning "don't do it!". Here is a photo for my Sister and I on a rare calm day on Buddina Beach (Sunshine Coast). In hindsight my Sister's advice was correct in terms of the challenge, but becoming part of CCPS made the challenge worthwhile. From my perspective some of the challenges included the overall load, the Mathematics C program not being accredited, limited inherited teaching notes and (physics) laboratory resources, some past



School challenges with assessment Moderation or Verification in my subject areas, and the combining of some year 11/12 classes (Physics, and Maths C in the first year) requiring dual teaching within available teaching time. I feel that over my 4 years these subjects were successfully transformed with Mathematics C accredited (in my 1<sup>st</sup> year), new/full teaching materials developed for every subject, relatively strong verification outcomes with my subjects known for being presented at a high academic standard, and where possible incorporating Labview programming into teaching/learning (including computer interfacing/data acquisition for some specific projects).

In addition to the setting of high academic standards, classes were made fun by their intimate sizes and the good humour of high character students who generally had strong connectedness due to the above-mentioned Family community. Many such examples of good humour come to mind but perhaps the funniest was in my first year of teaching combined year 11/12 Physics. The year 12 students were absent for a lesson (removed to attend a driver safety course or similar) and in their absence the year 11 students devised a "prank" whereby they would pretend that they had been taught a new "right-hand rule #3" within overlapping components of the year 11/12 syllabi on electromagnetism. Right-hand rules #1 and #2 had just been taught, along with their standard hand/finger positional manipulations that assist understanding, but there is no such thing as right-hand rule #3. When the year 12 students returned the next day, one of the year 11 students (with known comic skills) volunteered to stand up straight-faced and teach the year 12 students about the new right-hand rule #3 – he had the year 12 students performing all kinds of contorted hand manipulations. The totally confused year 12 students completely fell for it over a protracted period (I eventually gave the game away by tears on laughter that could no longer be contained at the back of the classroom). Another positively memorable and outstanding student, despite breaking a collective vow of "never speaking of the (following) incident again", even felt compelled to write up another funny incident in the School's 2017 year book. The incident involved the well-intentioned drainage sink removal from the physics laboratory and a very wet teacher. There is more to the story that made it funny, however details remain sketchy as to what, if any, attribution role was played by the teacher!

Like all Senior teachers, in 2019 I also developed and taught new year 11 QCAA curriculum materials (in my case for Physics, Mathematical Methods and Specialist Mathematics) which was certainly an interesting experience, along with more recently taking on a QCAA marker role for Mathematical Methods. When I tendered my resignation mid 2019 I offered to fully resign with the required 4 weeks notice (as per my contract) or partially resign and see the year 12 students (only) to the end of the year (whatever worked best for the School was my offered sentiment). The School chose the latter option which I was also pleased about since it allowed me to see the 2016 year 9 cohort from the time of my commencement through to graduation. Many lovely memories remain for that cohort, including for example a team from the class typically "punching above their weight" against many larger schools by graciously winning recognition in various years/categories within



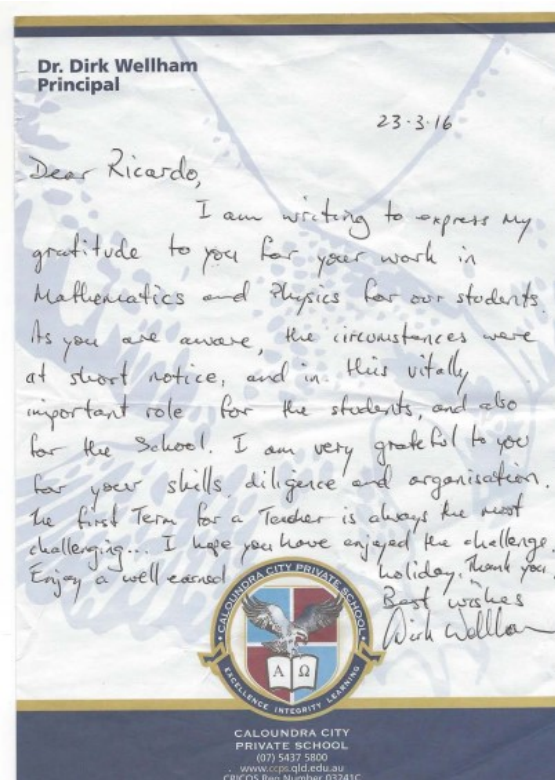
the annual Sunshine Coast Mathematics Tournament (e.g., as year 11 students winning 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 2018 Team Event as per the above photo). This achievement also made its way into the 2018 Year Book. Note though that this punching above weight descriptor refers to size only – during my 4 year period at CCPS the School lay claim to 2 OP1 students who, in my opinion, would shine amongst OP1 students from any school (as would other CCPS students, including from the mentioned Mathematics Tournament Team, irrespective of OP).

One of the students in the above photo also recently reminded me about an outrageous incident involving the teaching of projectile motion in year 11 physics. I have a collection of physics teaching equipment which on this occasion was a spring-loaded projectile launcher that had been stored in a work shed. Unbeknown, there were (seemingly) hundreds of small dead spiders internal to the device due to its length of storage. When taken to class for experimentation purposes, with each projectile came the launch dead spiders! with accompanying screams of combined hilarity and horror – not just a one-off but upon each repeated launch. The device became known as the "dead spider launcher" and from reports the incident is firmly entrenched as one of the funniest class adventures.

Many memorable moments can be looked back on with a laugh, including even funny little incidents like chasing an escaped goose to return it to its permaculture garden enclosure! and our class Mathematics parties (which took various forms and with one permutation involving a cake with Maths-themed icing). I will forever be heartened by the kind send-off words of the elected School Captain (for 2020) at my final senior assembly of 2019, as expressed within my reciprocated address at that assembly. Collegial correspondences between myself and the CCPS Principal and Head of Secondary (who left CCPS early into my final year) are copied overleaf.

In my first year of teaching I also wrote and published a small original e-book entitled *The Unification of Physics*. The book was written for students but in my opinion it presents significant physics revelations with real implications.

In some ways this period sees my professional career coming full circle not just because of the return to school teaching where it all commenced, but also because of a lovely coincidence. That is, through participating in QCAA workshops as a CCPS teacher, and then more recently through casual employment as a QCAA Mathematical Methods marker, I had the pleasant surprise of meeting up with the Mathematics C teacher (Sue nee Butler) from my own year 11 and 12 schooling, who is now in a senior managerial/coordination role within the QCAA. However, during this CCPS period I also laid the foundation for a new multidisciplinary journal for the Christian University for Australia initiative, for which I am currently Chief Editor. It has been pleasing to see this journal come to fruition from 2021, with each issue building upon the previous, and so together with my current provisional patent involving neural impulse encoding, a new circle begins .....



**From:** Amanda Stuart  
**Sent:** Friday, 14 July 2017 8:56 AM  
**To:** Ricardo Simeoni  
**Subject:** RE: As per very brief meeting this morning

Hi Ricardo,

I fully support this proposal. Thank you for being a consummate professional and I really appreciate your support, good humour and care of [REDACTED].  
I will discuss with Dirk when he returns.

Warmest regards

[REDACTED]

## HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL

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