Principal’s Message

The “My School” website with information on the profiles, student cohorts, performance and income/capital expenditure of the 9500 schools across Australia is now on line. When properly used it is a useful tool for teachers, students, parents and the community and encourages positive conversation about how all stakeholder groups can support schooling and its improvement in Australia. When I review the literacy and numeracy data for Menai it shows that we are as expected for a school that welcomes everyone in our local community and thereby expect a wide range of abilities and learning outcomes. The data also confirms a broadly shared perception that teaching and learning is going well and that there is a clear growth trend for students. This growth trend is above what would be a normal component due to maturation and experience. We use this data to micro manage teaching and learning particularly where it indicates a need for specific learning support or remediation. Our participation rate is 99% of students which is much higher than the national average. We do not attempt to hide poor performance, that teaching and learning is going well and that there is a clear growth trend for students. We encourage participation in order to inform teaching and learning in the future. I encourage everyone to visit the site in order to expand our shared awareness so that you can add your voice to the call for implementing the GONSKI REVIEW. Gonski has examined education funding in Australia and confirmed that unless the future funding models are corrected the Australian ethos that every Australian child, regardless of background, has the right to an excellent education will be lost forever. Over 55,000 people have signed up to the “I Give a Gonski Campaign” (on igiveagonski.com.au) but we need millions if we are to get it happening before the federal elections. We know that not all political groups have a history of supporting equality of opportunity for everyone. This is a vital opportunity which must not be lost for another decade. Help us to help every student regardless of their background. Finland is the top performing education system in the world by every criteria. They do not fund private sector schooling and focus totally on equity of opportunity in local schools. They reject competition and elitism. The result is what the rest of the world dreams of ie the best learning outcomes by all categories.

I am sharing the following letter for everyone’s enjoyment and pride in our school. “I would like to express my thanks to you for sending Mr Oste and Team Prometheus from Menai High School to the F1 National Championships in Melbourne. I took a week LSL to support the Team and saw first hand the wonderful opportunity offered to the Team by gaining a wild-card entry to the National Championships and their exposure to the world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. A huge thank you must go to Mr Oste for mentoring the students every day and evening throughout their event. His enthusiasm and previous knowledge of F1 was evident and he immediately gained the Team’s trust, respect and gratitude. Liasing with other teams at National and International level, as well as judges and industry role models, has fired their desire to further achieve in this field. I know that my son has developed a clear idea of where his path to employment is headed. He is especially proud of winning the “Most Energy Efficient” car design, sponsored by Rolex and presented to the team as a “very important award as it supports the sustainable outcomes for the future of the country”. The award of “Best Marketing” is also reflective of their great team work as they worked together fundraising eg Bunnings BBQ and gaining industry support of various local businesses; as well as meetings in holidays and weekends planning and devising the team colours, graphics and team image.

Menai High School has provided a wonderful opportunity to students by allowing them to learn leadership, team building, project management, business planning, public speaking, marketing, collaboration, writing and presentation skills.

A local resident has expressed her concern about our students crossing Old Illawarra Road. She is very concerned about their apparent disregard for their own safety and that of drivers. I am sharing my response in the hope that we can all maintain the pressure to secure the safety provisions our young people need, namely moving the express bus stop north of the Oriana Drive intersection and providing a “light assisted pedestrian crossing”. “Thank you for your road safety email. I agree with you totally and constantly remind students of the need for safe and law abiding behavior on the road. Youth often need targeted safety provisions to keep them safe. I believe the best protection for students and drivers will be provided by the lights assisted pedestrian crossing identified by Sutherland Council, RMA and police. Your support in securing this safety measure by forwarding this email to Sutherland Council would be the best way of ensuring the provision of safe guards to all users. Thank you for your care and concern.” Contact details for Sutherland Shire Council 9710 0333/ssc@ssc.nsw.gov.au and Roads and Maritime 13 22 13/www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Deputy Principal’s Message

Last Friday evening Menai High celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a reunion at Revesby Worker’s Club. Over 100 people attended and a great evening was enjoyed by all.

The Master of Ceremonies for the event was ex-student Michael Etheridge (better known as Mike E from Mike E and Emma, breakfast presenters on 96.1 “the Edge” radio). He did a great job reminiscing “myth-busting” and we thank him very for donating his time.

Menai High first opened its doors in 1988 to Years 7 and 8 only. The founding Principal was Mr Don Harwin and the founding Deputy was Mr Mike Wilson. Mrs McNally succeeded Mr Harwin in 1998 and there have been seven subsequent Deputy Principals. Three of the original twenty one teachers, Ms Kerr, Ms Lewry and myself, are still teaching at Menai. Our first Year 12 sat the HSC in 1992 and this was also the year, on April 6, that the school was officially opened by the then Minister for Education the Hon Virginia Chadwick MP.

Menai High enjoys the rare distinction of having received no less than five Director General of Education Excellence Awards in our short history. The awards have been for Strategic Planning, Promoting Multiculturalism, the Enrichment Program, the Cultural Exchange Program and, most recently, for twenty-five years of excellence in delivering Comprehensive Education.

Menai High is truly a great school and I have personally enjoyed being a part of it for every one of those twenty-five years. Happy Birthday MHS!

R LINDSAY
Welfare News!

Congratulations to this week’s achievers who have impressed their teachers.

Ms May recognizes her Year 10 CAS class, specifically Sara, Caitlin, Jackson and Martin for their dedication and hard work creating the MHS Historical presentation on Open Night and acting as guides on the evening.

Luke (Year 9), Robert, Nathan (Year 12) and Jesse (Year 11) also deserve acknowledgement for their assistance to the Science faculty on Open Night. Ms Bessell also commends Bec, George, Jess and Alex (Year 12) who are our Blood Ambassadors and are working tirelessly to organize blood donors.

Miss Rozga and Mrs Brown thank their Year 9 Food Technology and Year 12 Hospitality students for their excellent organisation and service skills on Open Night. Mrs Shales congratulates 7TAFT5 and 7 for their excellent effort in their first practical.

7E History students Maddison, Jovi, Richard, Iman, Adalynn, Rebecca, Meg, Nicholas, Maddison, Crystal, Liam, Natasha, Kaitlyn, Daniel, Connor and Marcus are recognised for their great help on Open Night. Ms Wearing also congratulates Olivia, Brittany, Georgia, David, Timothy, Emily and Morgan of 8G for their fantastic Heritage assignments.

Year 7 Camp

Last week an excellent group of Year 7 students enjoyed their 3 day camp at Morisset, engaging in fun but challenging activities. Students faced their fears on the Leap of Faith and Challenge Ropes, developed great teamwork skills, had fun with night challenge and Commando but probably the most fun and certainly the dirtiest activity was Mudworld—an experience that will always be remembered.

A special thank you goes to Ms Hamilton and Mr El Masri for their organisation, energy and enthusiasm and to the other teachers who gave up their own time with family to accompany Year 7 on their camp—Mr Graham, Mrs Hennessy, Mrs La Rosa, Ms Mundy, Ms Kavouras, Ms Bloylock, Mr Colella, Mr Giannoulou and Mr Jones.

Easter Show Excursion

Permission notes have been handed out today for our excursion to the Easter Show on Thursday 28th March. There are 53 tickets available. Get your merit certificates in to your Year Advisers because you can still pick up a permission note this week from Mrs Mundy.

It will cost $20 which includes entry, coach travel plus a free ticket to visit the show on another day.

Get your money in quickly so you don’t miss out!

Say No To Bullying

Last Friday, 15th March was National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence. In our assembly, Liam Tomalaris, our school captain, reminded students that we need to take a stand together against bullying, and that it’s not OK at any time. Bullying in all shapes and forms including cyber bullying, physical violence and intimidation must not be allowed to occur. There is no place for bullying or violence in, or outside, our school. Liam introduced a very powerful video clip called To This Day Project which reminded all students how damaging bullying can be in both the short and long term.

Students and/or parents should report any form of bullying to year advisers or deputies to stop the bully in their tracks.

K Mundy
Head Teacher, Welfare

School Athletic Carnival

The Menai High School Athletics Carnival will be held on Tuesday 26th March at Sylvania Athletics Track. Buses will leave from the front of the school at 8.15am sharp and return at 3.15pm. The cost will be $5 and is to be paid on the day. All permission notes must be returned to Roll Call teachers as soon as possible. Students who are making their own way to the track must be there by 9am and pay $2 on entry. All students are encouraged to wear clothing that matches the colour of their sport house. No student will be allowed to leave the ground unless they are with a parent, or have a note from a parent which outlines the time they can leave and the specific details of how they are getting home.

M Robinson, Sports Organiser/Rel HT PDHPE

Sports News

Luc and Tristan represented Menai High School last week at the NSW All Schools Mountain Bike Championships held in Thredbo. The boys competed in the U17 years Downhill, Dual Slalom and Pump Track events.

Both the Open Girls and Open Boys Basketball teams qualified for the Final 8 Regional Tournament which was held at Sutherland last week. The girls played extremely well and won two of the pool matches and reached the semi finals. The Open Boys team defeated Caringbah and Jannali High Schools and will now play Sydney Boys High in the Regional Final.

The Sydney East Regional Swimming Carnival was held at Homebush last Monday. Menai High School had six relay teams qualify for the carnival as well as six students qualifying in individual races. Jon finished 1st in the 100m Backstroke, 100m Breaststroke, 100m Butterfly, 2nd in the 200m Individual Medley and 50m Freestyle and 3rd in the 100m Freestyle. Jon was also awarded the 16 years Boys Regional Age Champion. Sarah finished 2nd in the 100m Backstroke and 1st in the 100m Freestyle and 100m Butterfly.

Harrison placed 3rd in the 100m Backstroke. Taylor was 7th in the Opens 50m Freestyle and Daniel Selmon finished 8th in 100m Breaststroke. James from Year 7 finished 5th in the 100m Breaststroke, 6th in 100m Freestyle and 7th in the 50m Freestyle. The 17+ years Boys Relay finished 4th, the 16 years Boys finished 3rd, the 14 years Boys finished 6th while the Boys All Age Relay placed 6th overall.

Congratulations to all students and good luck to Jon, Sarah and also James, Sam and Gareth (16 years Relay Team) who will all compete at the NSW CHS Titles.

M Robinson, Sports Organiser/Rel HT PDHPE

Ag News

What’s happening in Ag?

Menai High Agriculture and Primary Industries classes have been extremely busy preparing for the Show season, in particular for the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Primary Industries Students are grooming and training our school sheep and alpacas for competition. Year 10 Agriculture students are busy constructing our display for the Easter show. Year 9 Agriculture students are learning and preparing all things poultry for the Easter Show. Year 7 students have all done their induction to the farm and many classes have begun planting their vegetable gardens.

Last weekend, students competed at various competitions at Castle Hill Show. The following students have qualified for the State Final in Junior Judging competitions at the Royal; Lachlan and Katy, Merino Fleece. Daniel and Catherine, Grains. Isabella, Meat Sheep. Brandon placed fourth for both Grains and Meat Sheep and is the reserve for these State Finals. Drop in and visit our display at the Schools District Exhibits in the Hall of Excellence (next to the Dome) at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Ms Bourke, Ag Coordinator

Senior Seminar Program Schedule — 21st March, 2013

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<th>Year 11</th>
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<td>Period 2</td>
<td>ESL, English Standard, Geography.</td>
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<td>Period 3</td>
<td>Design &amp; Technology, Geography, Industrial Technology (Wood/Auto) Maths 2 Unit</td>
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<td>Period 4</td>
<td>Dance, English Advanced, Food Technology, Maths General, Modern History</td>
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Earth Hour 2013

Saturday 23rd March—8.30-9.30pm

School Earth Hour

Friday 22nd March—12.30pm-1.30pm

SEC Green Team