Principal’s Message

It has been another great week at Menai High School. Mrs McNally is currently promoting public education and Menai High School abroad in Japan and Korea with a potential for future visits and study tours in 2015 from high school students in these countries. Menai High students continue to shine with brilliant results in their Drama core and major performances. Congratulations to Ashleigh Power, Monique Constantine and Natasha Tsafis Year 12. In year 10 Emily Lu, Aisha Aidara and Prudence Wilkins-Wheat are to be commended for their selection in the 2014 NSW Public Schools Year 10 Drama Ensemble. Congratulations also to another talented student, Brittany Jansson who competed in the 2014 State Championship squad and put on an outstanding routine coming home with her squad as state champions. We are extremely proud of these students’ high achievements.

Over the school holidays a number of year 12 teachers worked tirelessly with year 12 to revise for the upcoming HSC exams commencing on the 13th October, 2014. I thank these staff members for their ongoing commitment and dedication to the education and care of the students whom they teach. We wish the year 12 students the very best outcomes for these examinations and their preparations in the next few weeks.

I draw your attention to the Sutherland Council’s advice about the dangers in picking up your children after school at no stopping zones. The council have clearly stated in correspondence to the school that this continues to be a problem and I support this view. The council makes it clear that illegal parking in school zones kills children. The council notice further states that “when it comes to ‘child safety’, Sutherland Shire Council makes no apologies for fining drivers who break the law around school and school zones. If you are endangering a child by parking illegally in a school zone you will be fined” It is best to plan with your child how you will get into your vehicle while it is still in traffic, even if you are stopped, they should wait until you have parked. You can find out more about Australian Road Rules and other road safety information on the RTA website www.rta.nsw.gov.au

At Menai High School safety is paramount and as the bush fire season has officially been declared, The NSW Rural Fire Service has announced a proposal for hazard reduction works from Monash Road, Menai and Alnafords Point South to Lavender Place throughout October to November, 2014 between 9am to 6pm. This will consist of prescribed burning of vegetation to reduce the bush fire fuel and assist in reducing the intensity and adverse impact of bush fires in extreme weather conditions. You can also obtain additional information on prescribed burning and property preparedness by accessing the NSW Rural Fire Service website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Our Parent and Citizens and School Council meeting will be held on Monday 13th October, 2014 at 6pm in the school library. It would be wonderful if you could come and join us and all parents are welcome to attend.

E Sayed-Rich, Relieving Principal

Deputy Principal’s Message

At the conclusion of term 3 we farewelled our year 12 cohort at graduation, reminiscing on their 6 years at Menai High School. However, this week has seen them begin 4 weeks of challenging examinations as they sit their final HSC exams. We wish them luck but mostly want to encourage them to continue studying. In addition, thank you to the parents for supporting your children through this stressful time, continuing to guide them in their path to HSC success. We know that these students are achieving Menai High exit outcomes of being skilled learners and skilled citizens who are skilled for life.

This term also marks the commencement of year 11 into their final year of schooling. With this transition comes excitement, but also an increased level of responsibility on their part. Last week Year 11 students received the school’s HSC assessment policy and were guided through a seminar to understand the expectations upon them. It is imperative that our students know the procedures put in place by Menai High School and BOSTES in order for them to produce quality work matching their capabilities. We are confident that Year 11 will rise to the occasion and continue the ‘Nerd Herd’ tradition established by their year advisers, promoting all students to not settle for anything below their personal best.

I would also remind parents that yearly exams are fast approaching for our junior students. Year 7 and 8 students will be sitting exams during class time as scheduled by their subjects. Year 9 will sit exams in the hall from 13th-17th November while year 10 will sit exams in a formal examination period during weeks 7 and 8 of term. Like our year 11 students, we encourage our junior students to place the necessary effort to study, to ensure they achieve excellent results.

Lastly I want to raise the issue of students wearing earphones. In the last few years there has been an increasing presence of music with iPods and mp3 players becoming almost as common as footwear for some students. Many believe that it helps them to work, or has no negative impact on their learning. This belief can be a serious impediment to learning for several reasons. It is true that music can help the brain function more effectively and improve our ability to remember and recall learned information, but the problem is that all music types are not beneficial.

Clear guidelines exist following decades of Scientific research into the effect of music.

- Music should be in the background, as being pumped directly into the ear negatively affects concentration and brain function.

- Using one earphone actually confuses your sense of hearing and causes the cognitive (thinking) parts of the brain to run less efficiently.

- Music with lyrics does not help you learn – it has the opposite effect as it engages concentration. In addition, the repetitive nature of popular music, along with its rhythm and chorus causes confusion in brain processing.

- Music that is highly repetitive (like dance) has a similar effect to music with words. The brain focuses on the rhythm and slight variations causing a loss in concentration.

The only music style that is good for your brain is classical (orchestrated, harmonised, and old style), but again this should only be played in the background. Also of note is that there are no circumstances in which students can listen to music during assessments, so the brain shouldn’t be trained to do so. The best study regime is one that mimics the environment of the exam hall. Students should enjoy music, but take the right action to ensure that it does not interrupt their learning.

K Scott, Relieving Deputy Principal

IMPORTANT DATES & COMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 13/10</td>
<td>HSC Exams: Yr 11 Camp! NSWTIF Year 11C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 14/10</td>
<td>HSC Exams: Yr 11 Camp! Oceans Alive Yr 9 Excursion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 15/10</td>
<td>HSC Exams: Yr 11 Camp!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 16/10</td>
<td>HSC Exam Work Placement (Hospitality, Construction and</td>
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<td>Friday 17/10</td>
<td>HSC Exams</td>
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Welfare News!

Ms Loh would like to congratulate Caitlin Williams, Caitlin Sloan, Maddison Gatenby and Ryan Queenin from Year 8 on their entertaining and informative presentation on assembly about their excursion to the Jenolan Caves.

Student Eye Clinic
Student Eyecare is a mobile optometry service, providing high school students with eye examinations. The Student Eyecare Program was established to provide students the opportunity to get their eyes examined to minimize the effects of poor vision that may interfere with a student’s learning abilities and subsequently hinder their academic potential. The main visual issues that go undetected are inadequate focusing and eye teaming abilities that could lead to symptoms such as blurry vision, poor concentration, fatigue, headaches and unwillingness to read. The aim of Student Eyecare is to identify these symptoms and provide students with the appropriate treatment, which hopefully results in a more enriched learning experience. Services are completely covered by Medicare Australia and they do not sell any items of eyewear. Student Eyecare will be at Menai High School in term 4 to carry out eye tests on any student interested in the program, starting from week 4. Notes will be handed out to students in week 1 of term 4 in roll call and will need to be completed and handed in to roll call teachers by the end of week 2 term 4. Students will not be able to participate in the program if the note is not returned. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me regarding this program or alternatively you can go to www.studenteyecare.com.au to read about the program.

Year 9 Camp
Final Payments are now due for the Year 9 camp. The three permission notes must also be handed into Mrs Ferraro ASAP. A copy of the notes can be found on the Menai High School website by clicking on the heading ‘School Years’ and then ‘Year 9’ under ‘Parent notes’.

Leonie Ferraro, Relieving Head Teacher Welfare

Wellbeing and Wisdom

AMDC

The Australian Mobile Dental Clinic van will be in our staff car park from Week 3. If your child returns the completed consent form they will have the opportunity to visit the dentist during school hours. X-rays, exams and photos are free through Medicare and many families qualify for the ‘grow up smiling’ program, which provides funding for a variety of other dental treatments. See the consent form for more information. The forms have been distributed, but your child can collect another one from Ms Hatzi or Ms Kavouras. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Ms Hatzi and Ms Kavouras

CAPA

I would like to congratulate the team of teachers who made the 2014 Visual Arts exhibition possible, including: Miss Almond, Mrs Brown, Mrs Colliss, Mrs Girdlestone, Mr Kelly and Mr Milic. The annual exhibition is always an excellent opportunity for parents and staff to view the artworks that students create during Ceramics, Photography and Digital Media, Visual Design and Visual Arts. In addition, I would like to thank the students who were vital in making the evening, including: Nicole Stewart, Niki Lampropoulos and Haylee Nelson who provided the food and beverage service; Michelle Burnard and Natalie Panov who performed on vocals and guitar. The team looks forward to the 2015 exhibition.

M Kelly, Relieving Head Teacher CAPA