Parent Newsletter

Published Weekly
11th August, 2014

Principal’s Message

A fantastic team of students—Janet Brica, Vitoria Camporeale, Cooper Challinor, Theodora Charalambous, Byron Dempsey, Jacques Du Casse, Katrina Fahd, Elizabeth Golikova, Alysha Haines, Blake Halstead, Jodi Morris, Dylan Moutevelidis, Alexandra Moutevelidis, Blake Obey, Ethan Patterson, Nicoletta Renneberg, Neha Salah, Kayne Sorensen, Jacob Wood, Shanie Woods, Paris Du Case and Sam Vella—have had the opportunity to work with film producer Al Ellis and Mrs. Sayed-Rich in order to produce a film which has been entered into the 2014 “Focus on Ability” Short Film Competition. Our film was uploaded and viewable for voting on August 5, 2014 at http://www.focusonability.com.au/FOA/Films.html, so please be sure to inform everyone to jump on the website and vote for your film. Winners will be announced at the awards evening in Sydney on September 4, 2014 and we wish them the well. The five minute film was shown to the entire staff last week and everyone was very, very impressed. Every vote counts so please help by voting and even sharing with a friend who you will encourage to vote.

We have an impressive team of athletes selected to represent Sydney East at the NSWCHSSA Carnival to be held at SOPAC—Homebush on September 4. Everyone elevated to this level is clearly talented and committed and we wish the team and their individuals in it well. Rising star Nicole Besz, Jacob Dol, Alyssa Saurine, Renee Mihaere, Rachael Cain, Maddison Boyling, Jesse Paice, Adam Ogden, Brad McWhirter, Blake McWhirter, Adam Engeler and James Mihaere.

A few weeks ago I wrote about Year 11 Michael Pickup’s involvement in the ice skating race in Australia and I am delighted to note that his skill and ability have been confirmed by some amazing results. The President of Ice Racing NSW has written: “It is with pleasure and pride that Ice Racing NSW wish to advise you NSW has won the Duke Trophy (State of Origin on Ice) last weekend. The competition was comprised of four age divisions, Michael Pickup was in the Junior A Division (13 to 17). He raced in ten individual events and two relays. Michael not only competed with great athleticism, he was also awarded with the Len Duke Award for the Best and Fairest skater. We are very proud of his valuable contribution to the team.”

Our own Mr Graham was at the event and he reported that Michael is an amazing athlete with great skill and even greater endurance and positive attitude as a team member prepared to do his best in every area. We are very proud of Michael not only because of these successes but also because he is a school citizen that strives to make positive contributions in every area of school life. Well done Michael and we wish you well in all you do.

The principal of our Vietnamese student visitors school has contacted us, overjoyed by the success of their recent two week visit. He wrote “Our Vietnamese student groups arrived safely yesterday. I am sure they are now resting at home after two wonderful weeks in Australia, or maybe they are too busy telling the parents about the trip they really had! Ms Tho told us they were taking a day off work having a much deserved rest. I cannot say enough how grateful we are for all your hospitality during the last few weeks. Our students only have nice things to say about your kind host families, friendly school buddies and teachers. We could not have hoped for a better host school. Once again, thank you for making the past two weeks such a memorable experience for our students.”

I wish to thank and acknowledge the contributions of Ms Ferraro, Ms Taylor and all of the host families who made this such a beneficial program for us in Menai and to our travelers from Vietnam.

Our Japanese guests from the Choo Sister City program also loved their visit at Menai High, particularly the one day visit involving their principal and teachers.

Year 12 students of Extension 2 English each complete a substantial major work in a form of their choosing. Kaylee Rankin has been busy perfecting her performance poetry and had the opportunity to perform at the Word in Hand poetry evening in August. Performing at a poetry event is such a seasonally rare and professional event is no easy feat, but Kaylee did us proud and received a glowing response from the audience. People actually approached her to ask where the work would be published!

I am moved to remind everyone, parents and students alike of the importance of learning and of getting a good nights sleep. Avoiding late-night technology use and keeping a regular sleep schedule are two important techniques for children. Recent studies found that adolescents used multiple forms of technology late into the night, including gaming systems, cell phones and computers. As a result, they had difficulty staying awake and alert throughout the day and had difficulty with school performance and poor behavior problems. When children stay up late at night texting in bed or playing computer games, they are increasing their risk for neuro-cognitive problems. In an 800-person sample, language, reading and Maths scores were higher in children whose parents reported enforcing regular bedtimes. Exciting, high-energy activity should be avoided within one hour before lights-out.

Pre-bedtime activities like taking a bath, teeth-brushing and reading a non-stimulating book will signal to the brain that it’s time to sleep. Learners, caffeine and sugary foods should be avoided. The ideal sleeping atmosphere is a dark, quiet room that is kept below 20°C. Technology should be removed from the bedroom. Insufficient sleep and poor sleep habits have been linked to health problems such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, moodiness, irritability, reduced memory functioning and delayed reaction time.

Deputy Principal’s Message

It is an exciting time to teach in the 21st Century. At Menai High School across the curriculum, Project Based Learning is a whole school focus for the next three years and provides an exciting framework through which students from Years 7-10 can explore pertinent issues such as sustain ability, natural disasters, making something of value to someone else and how to make the world a better place. Project Based Learning integrated with technology in the classroom allows for dynamic learning to happen and increases engagement levels for students as they become leaders in their own learning. Students exploring these broad global cross-curricular issues learn to work collaboratively, think critically, develop written and oral communication skills and have opportunities to create new ideas and design solutions to global issues. At Menai High School, Project Based Learning is aligned to our School Strategic Plan and exit outcomes – preparing all students when they leave Menai High School be Skilled Citizens and Skilled for Life. In the table on page three of this newsletter there are several key differences between Project and Project Based Learning.

Parent Teacher Night proved to be a successful evening where teachers met with parents to provide feedback about their child’s learning. E-Diary featured well in these conversations and it is great see that Student and Parent access is increasing. E-Diary is an important organisational tool in your child’s learning at Menai High School.

Menai High provides wonderful opportunities for students to share interests and demonstrate their skills and this is evidenced in the Film Crew’s entry into the Nova Disability Film Competition for 2014. I am extremely proud of the students listed in Mrs McNally’s report as they worked to produce a great short film exploring what disabilities is and how we should focus on the ability rather than disability a person may have. Their final piece is titled “Don’t Dis My Ability” and has been uploaded to the Nova Employment Disability website. Please click on the link below and share in our enthusiasm for the students’ work, view the Menai High film and please vote.


Our ESL Parent Café is growing in terms of the number of attendees and share in our enthusiasm for the students’ work, view the Menai High film and please vote. http://www.focusonability.com.au/FOA/Films.html

Don’t forget the P&C Meeting tonight in the Library at 7pm.

PS—We wish the students well during this important assessment period and thank the ESL Volunteer tutors and Menai Anglican Church volunteers for their generous support of this new program for students at Menai from a refugee background.

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Our ESL Parent Café is growing in terms of the number of attendees and providing support to families of newly arrived migrants. Thanks to the Menai Anglican Church volunteers for their generous support of this new school initiative.

We are indeed lucky at Menai High and I thank the ESL Volunteer tutors from Gymea Community Centre and Mercy Connect for their support of students at Menai from refugee background.

Good luck to Year 12 who is currently doing their trial examinations and I wish the students well during this important assessment period and thank you to the Year 12 teachers who are working hard to prepare students for the final HSC examinations.

E SAYED-RICH
Another great week of student achievement.

Good News
Ms Wearring would like to congratulate Hannah Banks, Leyton Davies, Tayala Nisbet, Maddison Boyling, Olivia Cooper, Adam Douglas, Lloyd Hamilton, Danica Keys, Isabella Miletich, James Waiker and Jemma Harlow in Year 9 for their outstanding Federation essays.

Well done to Elizabeth Golikova from Miss Blaylock for outstanding application in Society and Culture.

Miss De Mello would like to congratulate Victoria Angus, Katherine Hensler and Olivia Lipowski for their outstanding speeches in SAM.

Ms Garden would like to acknowledge Callum Norris of 9G4 for mentoring other students in class.

Well done to 7TAFT12 from Miss Liley on a very successful first practical lesson for the “Let’s Party” unit.

Ms Bourke would like to congratulate 10 SC1 on their awesome Dinosaurs posters.

Ms Mazoudier would like to say well done to Mitchell Nugent, Taane Naragona, Natalie Corbett, Becca Bradley, Tiarna Eshman, Jessica Tibbets, Sarah Elia, Samuel Richardson, Dale McGlynn, Lisa Johnston, Jordan Taylor, Alexandra Xirocostas, Rahmeli Ibrahim, Jazmin Everitt and Sean Bolton from 10HIS3 and Kasrey Nguyen, Jo Le, Themis Tsigkaris, Guesh Juanti, Mohammed Hamed, Yianni Perentiis and Arii Permanaputra, for the effort they made in completing their migration experience assessment task.

Year 11 Captains Speeches
During the school assembly next Friday (Week 5) the Year 11 Leadership will be presenting speeches to the school in their bid to introduce themselves and be elected as School Captains for 2015. The team this year have been very proactive in their endeavours with events such as the bandaged bear breakfast and worked well with Year 7 as they presented the Anti Bullying Policy. I would like to acknowledge the contributions they have made this year and wish them luck for both their speeches and the elections. The students running in the election are Brittany Jansson, Kristen Aigus, Sian Griffiths, Lauren Thomas, Emily Willmore, Marissa Kotsaris, Jordan Dunn, Caitlin Angus, Sarah Barker, Naomi Rahman, Keeley Hickey, Samantha Turpin, Jodi Morris, Pillay Deeyara, Sara Belani, Joshua Murarolto, Zak Rowlands, Andrew Aigus, Jackson Downer, Andrew Stewart, Jon Ryan and James Mihaere.

All the best.

Y Mazoudier, Head Teacher Welfare

IMPORTANT DATES & COMING EVENTS

**Monday 11/8**
HSC Trials continue, HSC Practical Dance
Exam (2 days); Ski Trip (3 days); School Council Meeting 6pm; P&C Meeting 7pm

**Tuesday 12/8**
Maths Competition; HSC Practical Dance
Exam

**Friday 15/8**
HSC Trials conclude

**Monday 18/8**
Year 7 MENA Swim School (3 days)

**Wellbeing Wisdom**

**Managing Time**

Students who achieve strong results would agree that time management is one of the most important factors in their success. Balancing after school and weekend commitments, part-time work as well as family time is no easy feat. You could assist your child to strengthen their school-based outcomes and the meeting of deadlines by preparing a term planner to chart assessment tasks, exams, homework and study as well as non-school commitments. The RMIT University site has some fantastic time management advice as well ideas on how to remain motivated and avoid distractions.

https://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/su/content/1_StudySkills/study_pdf/timemanagement.pdf

R. Hatzi and the Wellbeing Wisdom Team

**National Literacy and Numeracy Week**

We are set for an exciting week during Week 7 of this term for national Literacy and Numeracy Week. There will be a number of activities and competitions involving literacy and numeracy. Students have an opportunity to win a prize in each event of JB Hi-Fi voucher.

There will be:
1. a **Mathethon fundraiser** for Year 7 and the finals held during the Week 7 assembly. A JB Hi-Fi voucher will be given to the best speller.
2. a **Spelling Bee** with heats held at lunchtime during Week 7 and the finals held during the Week 7 assembly. A JB Hi-Fi voucher will be given to the fastest mathlete and one to the student who raises the most funds.
3. a **Music Video Making competition** in which lyrics must be focused on a mathematical concept or topic. A JB Hi-Fi voucher will be given to the makers of the winning video as voted by the students.
4. a **Rubik’s Cube challenge** during the Week 7 assembly with the winner receiving a JB Hi-Fi voucher.

Details about how to enter an event will be provided to students via the daily announcements and through English and Mathematics classes.

We look forward to an action packed week celebrating literacy and numeracy.

N Vickery, Head Teacher Mathematics

**Menai High School**

**Second Hand Uniform Shop**
The Second Hand Uniform Shop will operate on Tuesdays from 2.30-3.00pm.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Project-Based Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can be done at home without teacher guidance or team collaboration.</td>
<td>Requires teacher guidance and team collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be outlined in detail on one piece of paper by the teacher.</td>
<td>Includes many “Need to Knows” on the part of the students and teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are used year after year and usually focus on product (make a mobile, a poster, a diorama, etc.).</td>
<td>Is timely, complex, covers many TEKS, and takes a team of highly trained professionals significant time to plan and implement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher work occurs mainly after the project is complete.</td>
<td>The teacher work occurs mainly before the project starts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students do not have opportunities to make choices at any point in the project.</td>
<td>The students make most of the choices during the project within the pre-approved guidelines. The teacher is often surprised and even delighted with the students’ choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are based upon directions and are done “like last year.”</td>
<td>Is based upon Driving Questions that encompass every aspect of the learning that will occur and establishes the need to know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are often guided based teacher perceptions that may or may not be explicitly shared with students, like neatness. Are closed: every project has the same goal. (As in the example above, the result is always The Alamo.) Cannot be used in the real world to solve real problems. Are not particularly relevant to students’ lives. Do not resemble work done in the real world. Do not include scenarios and background information or are based on events that have already been resolved. Are sometimes based around a tool for the sake of the tool rather than an authentic question. (Make a Prezi.) Happen after the “real” learning has already occurred and are just the “dessert.” Are turned in. Are all the same.</td>
<td>Are graded based on a clearly defined rubric made or modified specifically for the project. Is just like or closely resembles work done in the real world. The scenario or simulation is real or if it is fictitious, is realistic, entertaining, and timely. Use technology, tools, and practices of the real world work environment purposefully. Students choose tools according to purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a model (or diorama or mobile . . . ) of the Alamo.</td>
<td>Is how students do the real learning. Is presented to a public audience encompassing people from outside the classroom. Is different. Design a fortification that would take your community through a bio or other non-traditional attack and make a recommendation to the city council for future planning.</td>
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See Change

See Change is a 6 session facilitated, small group program for families whose lives have been impacted by Drug and Alcohol Issues and/or Mental Health Issues.

See Change covers the following…

- Information on mental health issues, drug dependency and recovery
- The impact of these issues on families
- Understanding the process of change
- Strategies for reclaiming your life
- Tools for enhancing personal and family wellbeing

The Salvation Army First Floor Program have been working with families impacted by drug and alcohol issues for over 15 years and run a number of monthly support groups and education programs.

When: Tuesday, September 9 - October 14, 2014
Where: The Salvation Army, 23 Kiara Road, Miranda
Time: 10.30am - 12.30pm

Spaces limited, bookings essential – to reserve your place please phone 9540 4460.