Relieving Principal's Message

Welcome back to what promises to be another year of great achievement. At Menai High we have a tremendous team of staff, both teaching and administration, who care and are committed to the education and wellbeing of your child. My door is always open, as is the Deputies and Head Teachers, to anyone wishing to discuss any issues. At Menai we seek constructive solutions with all the energy and resources available to us.

I welcomed new teaching staff to Menai High including Ms Harry-Agriculture/Science, Ms Williams-CAPA, Ms Garden-HSIE and Mrs Hannah-Science. We congratulate the following staff on gaining promotion or permanent teaching positions at Menai High School. Mr Kelly, Head Teacher CAPA, Ms Scevity-HSIE, Mrs Overell (nee Mundy) -English and Ms Almond-CAPA. We also welcomed several teachers who are taking a temporary position. These are Ms Ryan-PDHPE, Ms Jock-EST. We also have current staff who are in relieving positions—Mrs Vickery, Relieving Deputy Principal, Curriculum while I am in the Relieving Principal position, Mr El Mastri, Relieving Head Teacher Mathematics, Ms Summerfield, Relieving Head Teacher HSIE, Mr Robinson, Relieving Head Teacher PDHPE and Mrs Ferraro, Relieving Head Teacher Computing Studies.

Menai High School is a safe, harmonious and productive school and I want to be sure that everyone is aware of the school's agreed "discipline code".

At last Friday's Assembly every student received a detailed copy of our Welfare and Discipline Policy. This represents cooperatively developed decisions about the school's beliefs and values, the discipline code, the school merit scheme and other supports available at school. At a full school assembly, all staff and students went through the discipline code. This code applies to everybody and outlines each individual's responsibilities as a student -

• within a large school;
• in their classroom;
• while in the playground;
• while travelling to and from school by bus, bike, on foot or as a student driver;
• accessing a large computer network

Our code is based on the Department of Education’s core rules which include:

• Attend every school day, be in class on time and prepared to learn.
• Maintain neat appearance, including adherence to the school's uniform policy.
• Behave safely, considerately and responsibly including when travelling to and from school.
• Show respect at all times for teachers, other school staff and helpers, including following class rules, speaking courteously and cooperating with instructions and learning activities.
• Treat one another with dignity and respect.
• Care for property belonging to themselves, the school and others.
• Behaviour that infringes on the safety of others, such as harassment, bullying and illegal or anti-social behavior of any kind, will not be tolerated. In particular we will target cyber bullying and harassment which is very damaging to others.

In particular it outlines a range of zero tolerance areas supported by suspension including -

• possession of drugs, alcohol and weapons;
• being under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
• smoking after being warned;
• offensive behavior and violence; and
• continual disobedience or disruption

In a large school individuals can only enjoy their right to a pleasant safe, secure and productive learning environment if each individual exercises their responsibility to comply with the discipline code. We look forward to your support through family discussion and by confirming your recognition and acceptance of the code by signing the sheet given to all students last Friday and returning it to their Roll Call teacher. These sign offs must be returned prior to February 16th. I am available to discuss any compliance or acceptance issues related to the code. In the absence of parents and/or students raising issues of concern, compliance with the code is compulsory for everyone. This is also an opportune time to collect parent and student permission to be involved in a range of other activities and supports. When appropriate we would like to be able to publish student work, photos and names in a variety of places including our newsletter, our website, our noticeboard and newspapers. A Technology Charter outlines the conditions of proper use for all technology and mobile devices. Signing this charter is a prerequisite for all students to have and use technology and mobile devices at Menai High School. This signed charter must also be received by Roll Call teachers prior to February 16th.

2015 also sees a change to the attendance policy for school students. Family holidays are no longer an accepted category for exemption from school attendance. Family holidays will now be recorded as leave. School students are only granted a small number of days leave per year.

Safety and the staff car park has become an issue. No parents are to drive into the staff car park to drop off or collect students. This car park is out of bounds for students. The car park is for staff members only. It is very busy at the start and finish of school and also during school with many delivery trucks accessing the school via the staff car park. These rules are in place to keep students and staff safe.

In 2014 Menai High moved to being a school that has laptops from Year 7 to 12. This has been found to be highly successful in the classroom supporting students learning. Year 7 and new students will have their laptops commissioned this week. It is very important that each student who is new to the school has their laptop at school for the commissioning process and to be using the laptops in their lessons from the start of this week. Also Year 11 received their textbooks last week. It is also essential that all Year 11 and Year 12 students are using the text books in class and at home to support their learning.

At Menai we are a uniform school and have now moved on from the transition year to the new uniform. All students are required to wear the new school uniform items that are available at the uniform shop. Older sport/PE uniforms will be phased out as the year cohort move on. Shoes must be non-porous fully enclosed black shoes. On sport days shoes must also be non-porous and fully enclosed. Students will be monitored during roll call and families contacted if non-compliant shoes are worn to school.

R Allen

IMPORTANT DATES & COMING EVENTS

Monday 9/2 School Council Meeting & AGM 6pm; P&C Meeting (Headspace Presentation) and AGM—Library—7pm
Wednesday 11/2 Swimming Carnival
Relieving Deputy Principal’s Message
Welcome to all of our new students and welcome back to our continuing students. It has been wonderful to see so many happy students with boundless energy and enthusiasm ready to start the new year.

In 2015 we are focussing on improving reading and encourage all students to read for a minimum of 15 minutes each night. We will be asking parents/caregivers to sign off on a reading record for each of their children/wards. It is important that students read material that engages them and is at an appropriate reading level for them. We hope that our students will both improve their reading level and further develop a love of reading as it is essential to successful learning in all subjects.

Our Year 9 and 11 students will be starting the year with their new courses or electives. Some students will love the opportunities provided by these new courses. Others will wish to change some of their courses. Each of these two year groups will be given an opportunity to change their subjects in about Week 4. Changes can only take place if there are places available. All students are asked to genuinely try their subjects for the first few weeks and wait for organised the meeting to make subject changes.

Our Year 11 students begin with a new structure to seminar lessons. Seminars are offered during Period 3 on Monday to Wednesday each week. A schedule will be published and students will have an opportunity to enrol in relevant seminars through Moodle. The seminars serve to enhance student learning and prepare them for upcoming assessment tasks. During Week 2 all Year 11 students will attend a seminar on Preliminary and HSC assessment requirements and responsibilities.

Our first School Council and P&C meetings for the year will be held on Monday 9 February with a presentation from Headspace Miranda about how parents can help their children through assessment and examination periods. It will be held from 6.30 to 7.30 pm in the library followed by the AGM and we invite all parents/caregivers to attend this important session.

Our first whole school activity for the year, the Swimming Carnival, will be held on Wednesday 11 February. All students are encouraged to participate and support their House by wearing House colours. The House colours are: Bradman – Red, Lewis – Yellow, Hewitt – Blue and Freeman – White.

I wish everyone a wonderful 2015 at Menai High School.

N Vickery

Welfare News!
Welcome back to school for 2015. I hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday. This year the wellbeing team have lots of exciting programs planned for all year groups on top of the diverse network and range of welfare programs designed to ensure that students feel safe and supported as they progress through their schooling years. These include Peer Mediation, camps, a student based merit scheme and a pastoral care program to help students transition into the school.

Should any students or parents have concerns or problems throughout the year, then please feel free to contact any of the following:

Deputy Principal, Welfare—Ms E Sayed-Rich

Year Advisers -
Year 7  Ms C Basford/Mr L Colella
Year 8  Ms K La Rosa/Ms N Hennessy
Year 9  Ms C Hamilton/Mr S El Masri
Year 10 Ms L Ferraro/Ms K Blaylock
Year 11 Ms H Scevity/Ms C Bessell
Year 12 Ms R Hatzi/Mr L Meagher

Counsellor—Mrs J Hackett
Chaplain—Mrs E Ramsay

Head Teacher, Welfare—Ms Y Mazoudier

Vaccinations have changed a bit this year. Students in Years 11 and 12 are being offered the opportunity to have a measles-mumps-rubella vaccine as a single dose as part of a catch-up vaccination program for students who are not fully protected. Students from these year groups have been issued their information packages and consent forms and they must be returned to school no later than 4th February as a nurse from NSW Health is coming to collect them.

Year 7 forms will be issued in Week 2. Year 9 boys are no longer required to have the HPV vaccination. More information will follow.

Y Mazoudier
Head Teacher, Welfare

eDiary
As most of you will be aware, Menai High School implemented the eDiary in 2014. This integrates most aspects of home-school communication and enables families to stay informed about their child’s academic life. After an evaluation process in Term 4, which included a parent survey, we have reshaped our directions for this year and are looking forward to refining the eDiary for 2015.

If you have not yet registered, please email us at the school on menai-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au with the following information:

Email, First Name, Last Name, Child’s Name, Child’s Year Group

You will be sent an invitation; just follow the prompts to join! Please contact Mr Chiswell on the school email if you have registered but have not received your email invitation. Also feel free to contact Mrs Hatzi if your eDiary is not working properly or you have any questions/concerns. Year 7 parents, please be aware that it will take another week or so to add Year 7 to our eDiary system.

Thank you to those who have already registered. We look forward to working with you all throughout 2015!

The E-Diary Team

P&C and School Council
Our AGM’s for P&C and School Council will be held during the first meetings this year. P&C and School Council Meetings are on Monday 9th February at 7.00pm and 6.00pm respectively. We encourage all parents to join our P&C this year to benefit from the close contact with the school. P&C meetings are held in the school library.

P Constance

Year 7 Orientation Dinner
Welcome all to another year at Menai High. The annual Year 7 Orientation Dinner will be held on Friday 27th February in our school auditorium. Tickets will cost $27.50 per person and can be paid for at the Front Office. Payments need to be made by Friday 13th February for catering purposes.

Robynne Challinor, P&C President
2015 Swimming Carnival

The 2015 Menai High School Swimming Carnival will be held on Wednesday 11th February at Revesby Pool. The Swimming Carnival is compulsory for all students. Buses will leave from school at 8.40am and will cost $10 which will include transport and pool entry. Students who make their own way to the carnival must be there by 9am and will pay $5 pool entry. Congratulations to the following Year 11 students who have been elected Sports House Captains for 2015 -

Bradman House (Red) Nicole Besz/Brendon Cole
Freeman House (White) Emily Farquharson/Liam Johnstone
Lewis House (Yellow) Madeleine Norris/Ethan Macky
Hewitt House (Blue) Alison Willetts/Joseph Richmond

K Newman, Sports Organiser

Host Families Needed

This year Menai High School will be hosting students from Ritsumeikan Moriyama High School, Japan from 4th-13th March 2015. We are looking for Menai High School families to host one or more of these students with an approximate payment of $250 for each student hosted. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to have an amazing cultural and language experience. For more information regarding the visit, please contact Mrs Taylor in the office or Mrs Ferraro in LOTE.

World’s Greatest Shave

Today, 31 Australians will be given the devastating news that they have leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma or a related blood disorder. That’s more than 12,000 people in 2015. To help with the effort to find a cure for these diseases students and teachers at Menai High will be taking part in “Shave for a Cure” on the 13th of March. The day will be run by Year 10 students and will involve spray colouring hair for a gold coin donation as well as shaving the heads of our brave student volunteers. If your child would like to shave their head on the day, they will need to return a signed permission slip from parents. Permission notes can be collected from and returned to Miss Blaylock. Our goal this year is to raise $1000. If you would like to help us reach this goal you can sponsor us at http://my.leukaemiafoundation.org.au/menaihigh

K Blaylock, Year 10 Adviser
Parent & Carer Information Evening

headspace Miranda in consultation with local DEC and CEO offices

Topic: A conversation around youth suicide

The session aims to provide:

- Factual information about youth mental health
- Factual information about youth suicide
- A space for parents to ask questions and voice concerns
- Information and skills for caring and supporting young people
- Awareness of headspace services and school wellbeing aims
- Collaboration with families, mental health services and schools to support young people in our area

When
Wednesday, 11th March, 2015 OR
Wednesday, 25th March, 2015
6:30pm - 8:30pm

Where
headspace Miranda
Suite 9522 Kingsway, Miranda, NSW

Contact
To RSVP for this event please contact
headspace Miranda 95751500

Other information:
Additional sessions may be organized based on interest and demand. Please contact headspace soon if you would like to attend, as spaces are limited.

Tea & coffee will be provided

INFORMATION SESSION

Seasons for Growth

Join us for a free information session to find out more about Seasons for Growth, a grief and loss program that helps children and young people understand and express experiences of significant change, loss and grief.

Children and young people learn:

- To understand and talk about the normal range of emotions experienced during major change, grief and loss
- How to build positive relationships with family and friends
- How they can participate in a caring and confidential network of peers and adults
- About the skills needed for resiliency
- How to plan for a realistic and hope-filled future

Monday, 2 February 2015
at 4:00 pm

Venue: Interrelate, Shop 1C,
383-385 Port Hacking Road, Caringbah

Note: Parents and children aged 6 – 12 years are invited to attend the session