Principal’s Message

Last week’s P&C, School council and SRC meetings were hugely significant in that they reviewed our current practices in delivering Special Religious Education (SRE) at Menai High School. They also took the opportunity to reframe and consider the extent to which our practice complies with DEC’s SRE Policy. This discussion was triggered by a Memorandum to Schools regarding SRE policy implementation as well as a variety of discussions with SRE delivery groups. Menai High School is a “Local Schools, Local Decisions” school and as such have opportunities to bring all stakeholder groups into the decision making process. At Menai High School a group of Christian churches fund a teacher (Mrs Bennett) to deliver SRE to Year 7 and 8 students that elect (opt in) to go to her classes. This has become a popular option.

Students not attending stay with their normal teacher and focus on practice/revision/consolidation work in their normal class. No new work is done so it is a “win-win” for everyone. A very small group elect to join Orthodox scripture which currently has a lunch or class time withdrawal option. Two Year 9 seminar opportunities will be offered to SRE providers this year. No other deliverers are active in SRE delivery at this time. These practices have evolved over many years and were triggered by the dysfunction associated with previous structures where a dedicated SRE period for the entire school saw few students attend while the rest of the school lost lesson time and became discipline and safety concerns.

Current practice is working productively and well for everyone. All discussion groups have supported the current strategies while noting the tension created by a DEC policy that does not reflect high school organisation and the fact that many students are young adults who are very capable decision makers in their own right. Other concerns expressed included:-

• Parents were unaware and did not welcome the fact that the requests for religious information on the enrolment form could/would be used to pressure/entice/manage students into SRE at school.
• Students were concerned that they did not have a voice in the decision to make religious data about them available at school and that the choice to attend SRE at school was not theirs. This was a strong sentiment and concern for Year 9-12 students, some of whom are 16-18 years old.

This has been a very constructive consultation and finalising our school procedures for implementing the DEC-SRE policy will be a listed item at the next School Council and P&C meeting on Monday 11th May. Please contact your representatives via the school—ie

• Mr Simon Brown
• Ms Robynne Challinor

or attend the meeting at 7pm in the school library. We always want to get it right for everyone.

As part of Menai High School’s Annual School Reporting process Menai High is required to undertake a Parent Satisfaction Survey. It would be appreciated if you responded to this survey. It can be found web2.menai-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/Moodle at the bottom of the first screen. The survey will be open until 23rd March, 2015.

Congratulations Mr Proctor and the SEC team. I was recently advised “Thank you so much for your recent entry to the Earth Hour Schools Competition. We received many entries from all over Australia and the calibre of work was extremely high. I’m happy to inform you that your entry has been shortlisted and has been posted on our the Earth Hour Australia Facebook page for public voting. You can find your entry with the link https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10155265748135117.1073741831.94410305116&type=3&uploade
d=7
Be sure to share this with your friends and family on Facebook, so that they can vote for your entry. Voting will end at 5pm on Tuesday 17th March. Remember, each ‘like’ is equal to one vote and the most popular entries will be given to a panel of judges who will then decide the winners based on originality, creativity and research. Congratulations and best of luck during the voting period.” So now please support another team of Menai High School heroes by voting.

Other student heroes include Andre Appenzeller playing in the NSW 15 years CHS Tennis Championships 2015 who made the Quarter Finals in the Junior Consolation Singles. Win or lose, that is an impressive result from a 12 year old representing Menai High School. Jayden Leung is a Year 8 boy off to China to represent NSW in table tennis. Wow! What an honour and achievement. Jordan Macbeth has been selected to represent Sydney East Baseball which is also a great honour.

We also have some teacher heroes that have done amazing things. Ms Blaylock and her Year 10 champions had raised $11,500 when I wrote this before the big “Shave for a Cure” event last Friday. She and they are amazing and have totally blown away the current Year 12’s record of $7,200 back in 2013. Ms Scevity’s capacity to organise complex events and the relief associated with them are a real blessing to the school, staff team and students. A parent recently emailed and noted that our PE staff, especially Mr Newman, stand out in the area for supporting and informing our kids. She wrote—“Menai High is always so good in getting out their information when it comes to sports/trials events. Other parents often say that half the time their children would miss out on these things if it wasn’t for them having friends at Menai High. It was good to sit there and listen. Just thought you might like to know.”

Ms Ferraro is another hero meeting with another Japanese school group wanting to organise for their school to experience “The Menai Way”. They overlapped with Ritsumei Morijana High School who were just finishing a seven day exchange and homestay experience in our school and community. We are indeed fortunate to be in such a wonderful school, with so many wonderful students, teachers and parents. It is no wonder that so much “Menai Magic” happens all the time.

E McNally

Deputy Principal’s Message

On Friday Year 10 organised a fabulous ‘Shave for a Cure’ day and raised an outstanding amount for the cause. Congratulations Year 10 and your Year Advisers Mrs Ferraro and Ms Blaylock.

To assist our school in the planning process students will be participating in a survey called ‘Tell Them From Me’. This gives students an opportunity to provide the evaluation team with very valuable data. Each student was provided a letter concerning the survey called “Tell Them From Me” and parents were provided the opportunity to opt out of the survey.

Subject Changes

Years 11, 9 and 8 have all had the opportunity to change electives/courses in the past 3 weeks. So from this point on the students pattern of study are set and no more changes will be possible, except for any Year 11 students who feel the pattern of study they currently have is too difficult. Students or parents can contact me to discuss the options available via an ATAR pattern to a HSC pattern.

Lateness to School

We have now passed the half-way point of Term 1 which has highlighted a number of students who have been placed on late alert. Each student is provided 10 opportunities to be late each term. When the 10 lateness opportunities have been used, the student is placed on late alert and if lateness continues detentions are issued to students.

Year 12

Finally, Year 12 start their exams in a week’s time. To help support your child during examinations ensure your child gets between 8 to 9 hours sleep each night and maintains healthy eating. Place a copy of the exam timetable in a very public place in the house so everyone is aware of the day and times of the examinations.

R Allen

IMPORTANT DATES & COMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 16/3</td>
<td>Year 7 Camp (3 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 18/3</td>
<td>Regional Swimming Carnival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 23/3</td>
<td>Year 12 Exams commence (9 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 20/4</td>
<td>All Students Return for Term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 4/5</td>
<td>Staff Development Day</td>
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</tbody>
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Parent Newsletter

Published Weekly

16th March, 2015

Week 8B

Website: www.menai-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
Email: menai-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Phone: 9543-7000
Fax: 9543-5513
Good News
A great week of student good news this week.
Mr Giannoulo would like to acknowledge Kareem Allem in Year 12 for excellent quality and detail of work and assignment that are completed to an excellent standard and Lavina Meyers in Year 11 for excellent work in class.

Mrs Blanche would like to thank Luke Phillips and Bernadette Wong from Year 9 for their help with Open Night, and commend Dylan Vlahos in Year 11 for his outstanding work ethic.

The TAFT staff would like to thank all the students who helped them out on Open Night. An outstanding effort.

Ms Hamilton would like to congratulate Dylan O’Brien-Smilie, Isabella Trevallon, Joshua Bryce, Kamil Danek, Lauren Alden, Mitchell Wood, Natalie Steele, Tiana Allen, Yacoub Daher, Ziantze Peters and Ben Johnston class for the wonderful Number Posters that they made for Open Night.

Well done to Jessica Barber, Laura Paull, Jayden Tran, Mya Davies, Joel Khoury and Brittany Langley from Mrs Frages for very good work on the assessment task “About Me”.

Eye Testing – Coming Soon
Permission notes were handed out to all Year 7 students. Any student in other grades who did not have the opportunity to have a test in Term 4 can fill in a permission slip as well and participate in the program. Notes are available from the office at Mrs Daniel’s desk. All notes must be returned through roll call. The tests will be carried out in the meeting room in the front office during Weeks 9 and 10 of Term 1.

Year 7
All the best to our Year 7 campers, we hope they have an amazing time.

Vaccinations
The first round of vaccinations happened on Monday. Any student who was absent form school will receive their first vaccination during the second visit. If you would like your child to receive the vaccinations but have not returned a form you can still participate. Forms can be collected from the welfare office.

Y Mazoudier, Head Teacher Welfare

Welfare News!

Wellbeing and Wisdom
Organisational Surveys
As announced in the Week 6 newsletter, the Committee for Student Organisation and Self-Management are currently reviewing our STOP program. This program involves explicit teaching of organisational skills with the aim of improving students’ home study habits.
After a few technical delays, we are hoping to send out the parent surveys early next week. Only those parents who have sent in their emails via the eDiary registration system will receive invitations to take the survey. If you would like to be a part of this process and still have yet to join our eDiary, please email the school at menai.h.school@det.nsw.edu.au with your name, email and child(ren)’s names.

We look forward to receiving your responses!

Many thanks,

R. Hatzi and the wellbeing wisdom Team

Bandage Bear Fundraiser
A big thank you to all staff, students and their families who helped the Year 11 Bandage Bear team put on a fantastic breakfast fundraiser on 6th March for The Children’s Hospital Westmead. Staff and students alike have said that the atmosphere coming into school that morning was electric, and it was great to see so many happy faces. A big thank you to the school farm who donated eggs from our own farm! In addition to this, the following people and businesses supported the morning: Nick Sergi from Top of the Crop in Menai, Jason Giannakos from Bravo Foods who donated all the sausages and bacon for the breakfast, and Robert from Woolworths Riverwood who donated a trolley full of fruit! The support of these businesses was fundamental in the morning’s success. A massive congratulations to the Year 11 team consisting of Jake Janos, Alisson Willetts, Megan Shipp, Byron Dempsey, Michelle Burnard, Laura Croan, Elle Hickman, Curtis Horbury, Sehel Mahmood, Vicki Milkevich, Cody Nelson, Sahil Narayan, Alex Shute, Maya Stempien, Rachael Lee, Natasha Gladwin, Nicholas Diwell, Zoe Adamson, Dale McGlynn, Aaron Roll, Yianni Persenitis and Caitlin Tullis for their excellent work, and an excellent breakfast!

H Scevity, Year 11 Adviser

A Big Thank You
Thank you to the Year 8 families for the fantastic response in donating items for the raffle for the Orientation Dinner held on Friday 27 February, 2015.

K La Rosa, Year Adviser

Payment of Fees
In the next couple of weeks we will be mailing out the Student Statement of Account. Please note that you may have made payments for items that appear on the Statement of Account in the period between the day the letters are mailed out and you receiving them at home. You will need to delete these items from the total amount owing. Please also note that when paying for multiple items, excursions etc you do not need to send in separate cheques or separate credit card details for each item. Please just send in ONE cheque or credit card payment to cover the total amount owing for all items and list the items that the payment covers on the envelope.
Separate payments are also not required for each individual student you are financially responsible for. Payments due for multiple children can be bundled up into one payment as long as each item being paid for is listed on the envelope. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

J Partridge, School Administration Management

Senior Seminar Program Schedule—Week 8, Term 1, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday Period 3</td>
<td>2U Maths, Economics, ESL, Food Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday Period 3</td>
<td>Ancient History, Dance, General Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Period 3</td>
<td>Biology, Extension 1 Maths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Seasons for Growth

This is an eight-week program for children aged 6 to 12 years that have experienced grief and loss in their lives due to a significant change such as death, separation of parents or a natural disaster.

Children will 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 resiliency
- how to plan for a realistic and hope-filled future

Wednesday afternoons, 4:00pm to 5:00pm
29 April – 24 June 2015
(includes party week)
Venue: Interrelate, Shop 1C
383-385 Port Hacking Road, Caringbah NSW
Cost: $50 per child

Bookings essential - Phone 8522 4450

Relating as Stepfamilies

This one day workshop assists couples to manage the demands of life as a stepfamily.

It will assist parents to:
- examine the challenges and positives of stepfamilies
- examine personal beliefs and the effects of holding onto these
- highlight the losses stepfamilies have suffered
- recognise the importance of developing stepfamily rituals
- compare different communication styles

Saturday 16 May 2015
9:30am to 4:30pm
$75 per couple
Venue: Family Relationship Centre
383 Port Hacking Road South, Caringbah 2229

Bookings essential - Phone 8522 4450
Morning tea & afternoon included.
One hour lunch break provided.
Being a Mum

This three-hour program will help mothers to become more mindful parents and build skills to encourage closer relationships with their children.

You will learn to:

- understand yourself as a mum
- connect with your children
- discipline children in a positive way
- bring out the best in your children

Monday, 11 May 2015
9.30am to 12.30pm

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

Bookings essential - Phone 8522 4450