Principal’s Message
It is always my delight to share the abundance of good news generated by our students and staff, “week in”, “week out”. This week is no exception with Lachlan Willmore being selected in a “NSW All Schools Team” which is the highest honour a NSW student can attain. He has become part of a great sporting tradition. His selection is for cricket and we are very proud of him and the honour bestowed on him. It is a reflection of his skill and commitment and we wish him well. Nicole Besz has also been honoured through her selection in the Sydney East girls Football NSW CHSSA team.

Year 10’s Study Skills Day last term was also a great success. This is one component of a larger, whole school strategy developing student capacity, ownership and self-direction through their edary, homework and good examination/assessment techniques so that they can really achieve results that reflect their capacity and knowledge. A recent DEC/university briefing showed us that universities are facing a 40% drop out rate in year one. A recurring theme is the problems students face in managing their own learning particularly now that many lectures are on line. Our homestudy and edary strategy is clearly a current need but also a key ingredient in future success at university or anywhere else. If we want kids to succeed now and throughout their lives as life long learners they need to be taught, learn and practice the skills that predict success. This is an area where parental support, involvement and supervision is vital. Your access to edary is your best tool to connect with your child’s learning and your child’s teachers.

Year 10 are shining in many areas. A recent report from the Jewish Museum highlighted that they were an exemplary group. Their behaviour, courtesy, work ethic and goodwill encouraged the Museum and the two McDonalds shops where they stopped for lunch to phone and comment on just how good they were. Add to this the Leader’s recognition of the $19,804.00 raised in their “Shave for a Cure” initiative and it is hard to go past them as our current “Shining Lights”.

If our kids are fabulous it is probably because of the genetic and social investment from their parents and grandparents. We have a fundraising grandmother, Kathleen Knipp (grandmother of Tyron Year 8) who is walking 60km to raise funds for “End Women’s Cancers”. She is seeking assistance from our extended Menai High School family to help this worthy cause. Details are attached on page 4.

I also received a letter from Head Teacher HSIE Castle Hill High School thanking us for the fabulous opportunity to join our recent Central Australia Geography Excursion. It was a well organised and enriching experience for all participants and everyone was very appreciative of Mr Proctor’s efforts as the driving force behind it all. She wrote—“During the Easter holidays I was fortunate enough to attend the Central Australia trip organised by David Proctor—I wanted to write to you and let you know how incredibly well organised the trip was; how well behaved all students were and what a fantastic experience was offered by David to a range of staff and students. The welcome extended to myself and my students by the Menai staff throughout the trip was genuine, warm and very much appreciated...I was also really impressed by the behaviour and friendliness of the Menai students on the trip. Several students ‘extended the olive branch’ to my students very quickly and this really helped two groups become one. The thoughtfulness David put into the trip was outstanding—from the welcome pack as we boarded the coach, to the regular sound-offs to check we were all present, to the clear and kindly expressed expectations for the group, to the booklets and of course all the places we visited. It was a smoothly run and very interesting ten days and I believe this is mostly due to the effort of David.”

I am also delighted to note the selection of a “Technology Wizards Team” based on students applications and merit. This team will be technology leaders in the school and as such will develop their own skill set as well as serve staff and students as they support the learning of others. Congratulations Bernadette Wong, Charis Vinu John, Joshua Thomas, Luke Phillips, Daniel Pazin, Lavinia Meyer, Oliver Jones, Bradley Jarvis, Blake Halstead, Cameron Gordon, Leyton Davies, Yacobub Daher, Jackson Curtis, Oliver Crowther-Miller, Tushan Chandra, Caerwyn Bartley, Nicola Barrett, Aidan Brown, Alexander Burrell and Kayla Winter.

Greg McNeill is a teacher who has given amazing service to Marine Studies teaching over many decades. He is going to manage the new Pilot Station at Watson’s Bay and has been invited to address a major international Marine Conference in early May. He does all of this as well as full time teachers at Menai High School. A truly amazing and positive educator.

Two incidents of attempted student abuse on the way to school in Woolooware and Caringbah caused me to remind all families to discuss travel danger and safety strategies with their children.

I also attach (page 3) a mental health alert from Michael Carr-Gregg, Managing Director of the Youth and Well Cooperative Research Centre, which is very important reading for parents of adolescents touched by depression.

E McNally

Deputy Principal’s Message
As this is my first report for the term and I would like to welcome everyone to another exciting term. During the holidays a number of students were involved in the Royal Easter Show and a HSIE excursion to Uluru. I would like to congratulate all the students and teachers who participated in both events.

This is the term Year 8 students will be participating in a Project Based Learning task. The topic is A Call To Action focusing on sustainability. For the next 7 weeks each faculty will be teaching knowledge and skills that students will use when working in their teams to create a digital campaign concerning sustainability. Year 8 and Year 10 will be celebrating the work students create during their project based learning task by conducting a combined Show Case night so parents can view the fantastic project the students create.

Just a reminder that Menai High are having a combined school development day with our Community of Schools Between the Rivers. The date of our School Development Day will be the 4th May. The focus for the day is a Key Note Speaker Simon Broapskew who will provide the COSBTR teachers with ideas and new directions on the topic of “An Education Worth Having”. At Menai High we have a real focus on using technology in all classrooms. Both teachers and students have a responsibility in this learning relationship. Teachers are required to provide students with learning that uses technology. Students are required to bring their device to all lessons. This focus allows students to be engaged in rich learning activities provided by their teachers. All students need to be prepared for all lessons by bringing their Dell device to each lesson. This also applies to any equipment students need for their lessons such PE uniform, calculators stationary and exercise books.

On Friday Year 11 were provided their examination timetable. Please ask your child for the timetable and either put the timetable on the fridge or copy the exams onto the family calendar or on your phone calendar. Start to talk to your child about how they are preparing for the exams and how you can support them during the exams. Students only attend school on the days of examinations and are to be in full school uniform. I would also like to indicate that no more subject changes will occur for Year 11 and Year 9.

R Allen

Term 2—Staff Development Day
Term 2 School Development Day will be changed to Monday 4th May 2015 to support a special day of professional learning for all schools in the COSBTR.
**Good News**

Kyra Van Winden of Year 9 made the long haul, during the school holidays, to Coonamble in the state’s central west. Kyra competed at the Pony Club Association NSW State Sporting Championships against other riders her age from NSW and Queensland. She competed in a number of speed based events and won the Bending race and is the fastest in NSW in her age group. Congratulations Kyra.

**Girls Night—Rained Out**

Unfortunately, due to bad weather our Girls Night was postponed. A new date will be coming as soon as possible as we wait for confirmation from our guest presenter. The girls from Year 12 have organised a night at school in the hall for girls in Year 9 which will focus on positive image as part of the “Plate up the Positives” initiative founded by the Butterfly Foundation. This connection between Year 9 girls and Year 12 girls was begun with the Year 8 gender day in 2014. Female staff from Menai High School have also been invited. The night will run from 6pm–8:30pm and will include a guest speaker.

**Motivational Media**

The Motivational Media group will be back at Menai High School Wednesday Week 2 Term 2 29th April. The presentation has students engage in social issues relevant to their age groups through a media presentation with a discussion held after each session. Students from Years 7-10 will see the performance which will run during a lesson on the day. If you have any questions please contact me to discuss.

**Eye Testing Week 1 and 2 Term 2**

Eye testing had begun. Students will receive appointment times at school. If you have not yet returned the note but would like you child to participate you can still send the notes in. Spare notes can be found at the welfare office.

Y Mazoudier, Head Teacher Welfare

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**Full Circle**

You may have noticed the wet weather last week! What you probably didn’t know was that Wednesday 22nd April was Earth Day. Maybe the Earth was crying because everyone forgot! Why not make it up to Planet Earth and show your support by keeping our school and the local community clean.

This term the SEC will be bringing you some exciting opportunities to support the Earth so please support us in these initiatives. Look for regular updates in the newsletter to find out what we are up to and how you can support the SEC!

D Proctor, SEC Coordinator

**LOST PROPERTY**

There is a large amount of lost property in the Front Office – calculators, reading glasses, sun glasses phones, usb’s, keys, jewellery, watches, pencil case etc. Please come and have a look through the items. We will be throwing them out on Friday 8th May.

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**Did You Know**

This is just a reminder that National Home Doctor Service is available if students or staff need a bulk-billed home visit from a Doctor in the after hours period—evenings, weekends and public holidays. With the largest home visiting doctor service in Sydney, they have a huge doctor team on the road every day of the year. Please call 13 SICK (13 74 25) for a bulk-billed doctor (Medicare Card needed) to visit you at home or your premises.

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**Wellbeing and Wisdom**

**Reading**

Most of us expect reading to improve our children’s vocabulary, literacy and writing, but it has a wealth of benefits beyond English skills. Did you know that regular wide reading improves your child’s maths? The theory behind this is that reading introduces children to new ideas, which may make new maths concepts easier to understand. It is unfortunate that our busy schedules can mean that reading may fall lower on our priority list as our children get older, but more and more studies are proving its benefits, not only to children’s education, but also to their emotional development. Take a look at http://www.edudemic.com/skipping-your-reading-homework/ for more information.

Year 7-10 will undertake their first STOP (Student Time for Organisation and Planning) lesson on Monday. During this, Year 7 will be introduced to their nightly wide reading program. More information will be distributed regarding this program over the next few weeks.

R Hatz and the Wellbeing Wisdom Team

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**Sports News**

A big congratulations goes out to Lachlan Willmore who has been selected for the NSW U15’s School Boys Cricket Team. Lachlan will attend the National Championships in Darwin in June.

Late last term we had a number of athletes compete at the CHS Swimming Championship with some great results. Rebecca Selmon and Sarah Siqueira both swam exceptionally well and were selected to compete at the NSW All Schools Carnival. A great effort from both swimmers.

James Walker is to be congratulated on his recent amazing achievements in Karate. James recently won the Australian Schools and University Championship and Australian Open Championship in which he was undefeated in all 8 bouts against his own age/weight class and open weight class competitors. He will be representing Australia in Croatia at the world youth cup in July. A fantastic achievement.

Although injured, Kurtis Beare has been successful in being selected in the 2015 Australian Junior Tournament Water Skiing squad. This is a wonderful achievement for a true competitor.

K Newman, Sports Organiser

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**Christian Orthodox SRE Seminars coming to Menai High School 2015**

The Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Stylianos at Gymea is proud to be sponsoring a series of SRE (Special Religious Education) seminars this year for all Christian Orthodox students in years 7-10. These seminars are designed to answer young people’s questions about Christianity and hopefully inspire a Faith in God that is relevant to today’s challenging times.

The Menai SRE Seminars will be held once per term over the remainder of the school year.

Please note these dates on your calendars:

- Term 2 June 17th
- Term 3 August 19th
- Term 4 November 11th

Details will be announced in the forthcoming weeks.

We look forward to your participation in these important and valuable Christian Orthodox SRE events.

Father Constantine Varpitias - Parish Priest (enquiries ph: 0418 51 12 12), Louis Chambers SRE Coordinator

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**Senior Seminar Program Schedule—Week 1, Term 2, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 7/5</td>
<td>2U Maths, ESL, Hospitality, Legal Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 8/5</td>
<td>Extension 1 Maths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**IMPORTANT DATES & COMING EVENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 28/4</td>
<td>School Athletics Carnival</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 4/5</td>
<td>Staff Development Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 8/5</td>
<td>Formal Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 11/5</td>
<td>Year 11 Exams commence (2 weeks)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 12/5</td>
<td>NAPLAN Tests (4 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 18/5</td>
<td>Zone Cross Country</td>
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Alertness to mental disorders key to preventing youth suicides

Michael Carr-Gregg
Published: March 26, 2015 - 2:55PM

The students at SCEGGS and other Sydney private schools rocked by suicides in the past few months will all be united in asking why their respective fellow student made the choice to end their own life. They will undoubtedly be plagued by many questions and will run a gamut of emotions, from sadness, confusion, anger and fear.

Youth suicide is an immensely complex interplay of social, psychological, neurological, biological and cultural variables. The problem is that these variables carry unequal weights and no single one has been demonstrated to be necessary or sufficient to cause an individual to take their own life. This makes it very difficult to predict whether a young person is likely to die by suicide and therefore, as many schools in Sydney have found out, difficult for others to act in time to prevent it.

Despite all that has been done by successive governments, research shows that suicide remains the leading cause of death for young people aged 15 to 24. Almost a third of young people have experienced suicidal ideation in their lifetime and in an average year 12 classroom, one young person has made a suicide attempt.

In trying to fashion an answer to the question, I am reminded of a young woman I met a decade or so ago. She was just 15 and I'll call her Lucy. A few months before I met her, she had tried to take her own life.

When she was asked in a public forum, why she made this decision, she told the gathering: "I thought I would never see, hear, or know anything ever again." So for her, this act seemed to be about problem-solving. Digging deeper, it seemed that her problems were not actually out of the ordinary, there was some conflict at home and a few problems with school and friends. The problem was that Lucy had undiagnosed depression.

A series of psychological autopsy studies over the last few decades, have identified several important risk factors and studies show that 90 per cent of young people who end their lives have a mental disorder at the time of their death, the most common being depression, psychosis and substance abuse disorders.

They say everyone is a genius in hindsight and looking back at her history, Lucy did show some signs of depression. In the previous weeks she had told her mother that she was feeling unwell and sad, she no longer participated in previously pleasurable activities such as cooking and helping around the house. She had trouble falling asleep, waking during the night and waking very early in the morning. She complained of being tired and having no energy.

Lucy became overly self-critical and developed a preoccupation with past failures and mistakes. Her depression distorted her moods, incited uncharacteristic behaviour, destroyed the basis of rational thought and finally eroded her desire to live.

She finally reached the point where she no longer found anything interesting, enjoyable or worthwhile. Everything that was once sparkling in her life, now seemed flat. Her depressed brain did little more than torment her with a litany of what she felt were her inadequacies and shortcomings, taunting her with the desperate hopelessness of it all. Without the reinforcements afforded by antidepressant medication and cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness, exercise and dietary changes, thoughts of death became her constant companion. For Lucy, dying seemed the only release from the unbearable misery an overwhelming sense of inadequacy and blackness that surrounded her.

So what is the legacy of these recent Sydney school tragedies? It is that all schools and parents redouble their efforts to build the emotional literacy of students and that all know the difference between sadness and depression, that depression is treatable and that help is just a phone call or a click of a mouse away.
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One Weekend CAN CHANGE THE WORLD
Help me by donating to The Weekend to End Women’s Cancers™ benefiting the Chris O’Brien Lifehouse at RPA.

Hi, my name is Kathleen Kelp and I am a mother of one of the children at the school. Myself and two other mothers, have made a commitment to walk 30 kilometres in one weekend to help raise money towards research to end women’s cancers. This has affected each and everyone of us in different ways and we will affect many people at some point in their lives. We are on a mission to end all women’s cancers. That’s why I am participating in The Weekend to End Women’s Cancers.

Proceeds from The Weekend will support the development of the Chris O’Brien Lifehouse at RPA, a world-class centre that will transform cancer treatment for Australians in an environment driven by discovery, research and uncompromising care.

The weekend is dedicated to making a real difference in the fight to end breast and gynaecological cancer, so even though I’m required to raise a minimum of $2,000, my goal is to raise much more! Help me make a REAL DIFFERENCE and SPONSOR ME with a generous donation by visiting endoancer.org.au and clicking on the ‘Donate’ button.

Name: ____________________________
Participant #: ________________