MADD (Music, Art, Drama, Dance)

Our annual festival of Creative and Performing Arts returned to the Riverside Theatre for the second year. Ms Walker took another risk this year: holding MADD over two nights. This risk paid off with students playing to full houses on both nights.

They wowed the audience with the depth and range of student performance. That there were different performances on both nights is a testament to the creativity and skill of our students and the hard work of our teachers. I attended on the second night. From the engaging opening by the Concert Band through to a lively and colourful dance performance (what’s not to love about sequins, feathers and smiles?) the audience was entertained. We had moving duets, stirring solo singers, classical pianists, a jazz trombone player, a thrash punk band, guitar groups, and meaningful dances. With this variety show, there was something for every taste. And our comperes diverted us with witty banter while the stage changes were made.

One parent with a long-time association with the CAPA faculty (his older son is now at university and was heavily involved in CAPA at Muirfield and the younger one is still at school and currently involved in CAPA activities) said he felt the quality of the performances was much higher than when held at school, the better sound system, lighting and acoustics notwithstanding. He asked if perhaps the students were lifting their game as they were in a professional theatre. I believe it is that but also that Ms Walker has raised the expectations. Students are to be prepared; they are to audition; they are to be fully rehearsed. Students have risen to the expectations. The result is two nights of quality performances. Having fun doesn’t mean that quality has to be sacrificed.

I know organising events such as these is both exhausting and exhilarating for teachers. I thank, on behalf of parents and students, all the staff involved for giving up their time and allowing our students the opportunity to perform on a professional stage. Well done Ms Walker and her team: Ms Ng, Ms Frame, Ms King, Ms Denny, Ms Miller, Mr Campbell, Mrs Scott, Ms Pasternatsky, Mrs Ansoul, Mrs Lampinen, Mr Keevers and Mr Thwaites. Thank you to all the parents who also helped out – with costumes, rehearsals, transport, assisting back stage, paying for dance and music lessons, buying tickets and attending on the nights. Your work is vital in ensuring our young people continue to be able to participate in such exciting events. I also acknowledge the work of the CAPA Parent Committee in supporting the CAPA faculty.
It was lovely to receive thanks and appreciation from parents. I have included one below.

Dear Jennifer

I had the privilege of helping backstage at Riverside last night. The positive buzz in the air was a treat to see and reminded me of how much it means to kids to have an opportunity to perform, especially at such a fabulous venue. Some of the girls were so excited about friends and family being in the audience and obviously felt incredibly special to be on the stage.

Congratulations and thanks to your amazing CAPA staff for all the effort they have put in to provide this wonderful opportunity for so many students.

I was with the dance students for the second half and was very impressed with the way the girls related and encouraged each other. You would have been very proud to have been amongst them. They are a wonderful group of ambassadors for Muirfield High School.

I look forward to being part of the audience this evening.

Regards

Chris Sinden

TheatreSports
Create a short scene set in a castle that tells a story and uses dialogue, movement and the stage. You have 5 seconds to prepare. Not a problem for our TheatreSports team. Create a musical about a personal trainer; everyone must sing their lines. Again, you have five seconds to prepare. No worries!

I had the great pleasure in watching our Senior TheatreSports team compete in the state grand finals on Sunday 21st July at the Enmore Theatre. Ms Miller had been laid low by a virus but that didn’t stop her coaching and encouraging them from the side line in the lead up to the grand final. Not many people could get up on a stage and act, let alone only being given the theme or location and having to make it up on the spot, in front of the audience, in five seconds. The judges look for narrative, stage techniques, the team’s ability to engage the audience and the team’s ability to work together and bounce off one another.
Mrs Miller and her team, Kalli Merriman, Christian Mattby, Zack Nelson and Rhys Mackenzie, have worked hard at developing their skills. It is wonderful that our Senior team made it to the grand finals two years in a row. While this year’s team is a totally different group of students, it shows our drama program extends and challenges all year groups. Well done team!

Years 9 & 10 Science and Engineering Challenge
Congratulations to Mrs Fleet who took 32 of our Year 9 & 10 students to compete in Macquarie University’s Science and Engineering Challenge in Week 1. It shows the commitment of our teachers that our students have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities, in this case to solve real world problems using scientific principles. Even better, they came fourth in the competition, beating some very wealthy and well-resourced non-government schools.

Thank you P&C
Thank you to the P&C’s fundraising efforts and to parents who have paid the P&C contribution. During the holidays we were able to install blinds in classrooms, mainly in Mathematics, that did not have any. These blinds were funded by the P&C. Mr Highman reported that the difference in the reduction of glare was noticeable from the first day. With our plan to have interactive short-throw data projectors in every classroom within the next 18 months, blinds are crucial.

The P&C has also supported the ground improvements undertaken by Years 11 and 12 Construction classes as part of their course work. Students have to demonstrate industry-based competencies. To do so they need to undertake project-based learning. One such project is the new student bike area. Under Mr Phelps instruction, students excavated soil, laid concrete, secured bike racks, laid a brick edge and retaining wall blocks, laid compacted decomposed granite and landscaped the area. Again, the materials were funded by the P&C.

Year 7 & 8 Debating Team
Watching Ms Adams’ Year 7 & 8 debating team debate against Seven Hills High School brought back great memories for me. I was on several debating teams at high school and have been a debating coach at many schools. Adjudicating the debate was the debating adjudicator from my first debate at high school! It is quite challenging for students to prepare a debate with only one hour’s preparation time and no access to adults, the Internet and reference books. I was impressed with the thoroughness of defining the topic by Nathan O’Shea as the first speaker for our team; the logical arguments presented by Andrew Kanaan, our second speaker, and the energy and confidence of Ramtin Rehavi as third speaker. They were supported by Anna Chong as fourth, or silent, speaker. Our students did very well. Congratulations to Ms Adams. They are off to the next round against Cumberland.
**New Newsletter**
Previously we had two different editions of newsletters. Muirfield Matters was a more lengthy volume and Muirfield News was a two page number. This harks back to the days when Muirfield had far fewer students and only had one Deputy. I do not think that we need to have the two different volumes. From this term, there will be three editions of Muirfield Matters a term. The aim is to have the newsletter published by Friday Weeks 3, 6 and 9. I thank Mrs Bassett who works in the front office Monday to Wednesday for her work on the newsletter. Her publishing skills are much appreciated.

**School Development Day – engaging students**
This term opened with staff engaged in professional learning, focusing on strategies to engage students in the classroom. I have previously written about the importance of ongoing professional learning for teachers. It is central to our relentless focus on building even higher standards and higher expectations.

We had a lengthy presentation by Professor Wayne Sawyer from UWS. Professor Sawyer has undertaken many large scale research projects focusing on what makes an effective teacher, ie what actions by the teacher have the greatest impact on student results. Much of his work ties in with our ongoing professional learning and the work of teams that operate within the school to support one another’s practice. Strategies that Professor Sawyer highlighted as successful include differentiating between the delivery of knowledge and using or applying knowledge, thus making best use of cooperative learning in class. He also outlined the difference between note taking and note making for Senior students.

All staff then attended a number of workshops; one led by Professor Sawyer on teaching reading for engagement. Other workshops were led by our own teachers who shared ICT practices that teachers can use to engage students in the classroom. If I said Google Docs, Glogster or Moodle Tests when I first started teaching others would have thought I was speaking gobbledygook. These are applications teachers are now using in the classroom.

**Years 8, 9, 10 Parent Teacher Evening – Thursday 1 August**
For the second time, Parent Teacher Evening bookings have been made online. Mr Grant successfully co-ordinated this online process with both staff and parents and deserves whole hearted congratulations. The feedback from both parents and teachers on this new process has been extremely positive. Over 1,500 appointments were made in the first week.

Thank you to all parents who made themselves available to hear valuable feedback from their child’s teachers and also a big thank you to staff that made themselves so openly available to our parents. It is this quality partnership that makes improving the learning for our students at Muirfield High School such a pleasure. As parents are now able to control the booking process, rather than hope their child makes an appointment, teachers are being booked out. I appreciate the forbearance of parents as we work out other systems to ensure parents and teachers can communicate.

**International Exchange Students!**
We have started the term with a number of international visitors. We welcome Liliana Marchette, cousin to Ehlena in Year 9. Liliana comes to us from Italy and will be experiencing school in Australia for three weeks. She says the thing that she really liked is that we have a dance studio here and this gives her the opportunity to dance.

Liliana Marchette

Two of our visitors from Europe are staying for a term. Lea Plata is from Switzerland. She likes that students have so many subjects from which to choose and that they do not all focus on theory, as her subjects at home tend to do. She also likes that you get to do fitness training here in PDHPE.

Lea Plata
and sport, using the equipment in the gym.

From Denmark we have Cecilie Rasteen. She is staying for a term with the possibility of extending her enrolment. Cecilie says the biggest difference compared to Denmark is the wearing of uniforms. For 11 years at school in Denmark she has never worn a uniform. But she also said, “It makes the decision of what to wear easier in the morning.”

Staying to complete her education here in Australia is Dream Utharavitan from Thailand. Dream is enjoying the challenge of improving her English.

Department of Education and Communities Restructure

As you may be aware, the bureaucracy of the DEC is undergoing a restructure. As part of that restructure, from the start of this term, we are now part of a new network, the Dural network. This network includes all of the schools in the previous structure, including our main primary partner schools – North Rocks, Baulkham Hills North and Murray Farm Public Schools – and secondary schools with whom we work collegially to support our teachers and students – Carlingford, Pennant Hills, Castle Hill, Cherrybrook Technology, Epping Boys, Cheltenham Girls and Galston High Schools. In previous newsletters we have described some of the joint teacher professional learning and student-based initiatives that we have undertaken. These will continue.

We welcome Mr Tim McCallum who is the new director of Dural network. He comes to the role with extensive experience as a secondary Principal. Our previous director, Mrs Janet Wasson, has moved to a new network. I have appreciated the support Mrs Wasson has given me and Muirfield. On behalf of our school community, I wish to thank Mrs Wasson most sincerely for her efforts and wish her well in her new role. As part of this restructure the Department’s Hornsby District Office will be closed in the near future and the remaining staff transferred to other locations. Thus, Mr McCallum’s base is the Nirimba Educational Precinct in Eastern Road, Quakers Hill.

Uniform

It was pleasing to see the vast majority of students correctly attired in full school uniform this term. Despite the cold weather it is vital students wear their full uniform. In particular, students should have the correct footwear and jumper or jacket.

Parents and students are reminded that hooded jackets are NOT part of the uniform and students who choose to wear these will be disciplined in accordance with the school’s fair discipline code. Girls who wear tights without wearing a skirt over them will also face disciplinary consequences. Track suit pants are only to be worn on Wednesdays for students in Years 8 to 11.

Supporting our students – subject selection process

Next Monday 5 August we will be holding our subject information evening for Year 8 going into Year 9 and Year 10 going into Year 11. This evening provides an opportunity for parents and students in Years 8 and 10 to find out details about the Record of School Achievement (ROSA) and the Higher School Certificate courses that our school will offer over the next two years. The Year 8 presentation will take place in the hall starting at 5.00 pm and the Year 10 presentation will commence at 7:00 pm. I look forward to seeing all parents of Year 8 and 10 at these presentations.

To assist students in making the most informed choice, following this evening, Year 10 students will have a subject sampler day, on Friday 9 August, for those subjects they may not have experienced and for those subjects that are only offered in Stage 6. There will then be time for students to talk with their parents, teachers and the Careers Adviser before subject selections are due. On
Friday 30 August, Year 10 students and their parents will have interviews with a teacher, refining subject choices.

**HSC Major Works**

At this time of Term 3, our Year 12 students undertaking courses with major works are very busy. On Monday I spent an hour with Mr Dark reading through his students' Personal Interest Project (PIP) for Society and Culture. His students have produced amazing reports – researched, logical and with sustained arguments on a topic they feel strongly about. I was truly impressed with the quality of work and the variety of topics – misogyny in Australia, growing up in cross-cultural families, the impact of technology on adolescents' socialisation are just a few of the topics.

On Tuesday night I viewed the Year 12 HSC group drama performances. Again I was amazed at both the talent and the maturity of Mrs Miller’s students.

Good luck to all our Year 12 students with major works and practicals.
MADD
MADD

Congratulations to Ms Walker, Mr Lavis and all students in the band.
Dear Mrs. Jennifer Reeves and Muirfield High School teachers,

It’s hard to believe that it’s already been a week since we returned to Japan. Thank you so much for all your hard work and welcome during our school trip. Your kindness was very much appreciated. It really feels like the school trip was all a dream. By letting us visit your school we could experience the comfortable atmosphere, substantial library, the livestock that the students take care of, and the drama class. Everything was a big surprise to us. For example, the high level of the students studying Japanese, the relaxed feeling between classes, the dedication during classes, and the respect between the teachers and students while remaining friendly. Both the students and teachers worked together well. It was impressive that at the staff meeting the teachers seemed relaxed but continued with business. I also remember that when your students served us tea, the teachers applauded them. I was very moved to see the relationship.

In addition, the buddy students were very kind and helpful to our students. They really made them feel welcome and listened quietly to their presentation. Even though the teachers were busy they still took the time to show us their classes and host a barbecue in our honor. It truly was a pleasure. Our students couldn’t speak English so well and were nervous about the home stay but the families provided them with an unforgettable and precious experience.

Lastly, starting with Mrs. Reeves and continuing to all the teachers, buddy students and their families, we give a very big thank you from our hearts. It will soon be cold and winter in Australia. We hope that you will take care of yourselves.

Sincerely yours,

Okamoto Yasunori, Principal
Kataoka Masumi and Tomoyoshi Hiroki, Instructors
APPLICATIONS FOR EXEMPTION FROM ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Parents and caregivers are reminded that any planned absence which extends beyond five days is not treated as leave by the DEC.

An Application for Exemption from Attendance at School must be submitted and, if approved, a Certificate for Exemption from Attendance at School will be issued.

This certificate needs to be carried with the student for the duration of their absence and produced when requested by police or another authorised attendance officer.

Application forms can be accessed through the “Attendance and absences” page under the “Our school” tab on the school’s website.

Please submit the application at least 10 school days prior to your child’s departure to ensure sufficient time for consideration of your application, processing, contacting you with a response and mailing of the certificate. Early applications are especially important for students in Years 10 and 11. Please note: the school may not be able to accommodate alternate provision for assessment tasks. Students in Year 12 are generally not granted exemption for family holidays.

If your child’s absence is due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstances such as a bereavement, where it is not possible to provide notice 10 school days in advance, please tell the office staff so your application can be expedited.

Muirfield HS Attendance Policy can be accessed through the “Muirfield HS Policies” page under the “Our School” tab on the school’s website or you can click on the link provided http://www.muirfield-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/documents/4368251/4374154/Attendance%20Policy.pdf

NATIONAL SELF DETECTION PROGRAM FOR SCOLIOSIS

July and August are the months where all Year 7 and 9 girls can participate in the National Self-Detection Program for Scoliosis (NSDP). A brochure on NSDP can be found on the following two pages of the newsletter or, alternatively, can be accessed directly via a link on the Scoliosis Australia home page:

Scoliosis (spinal curvature) is an important health problem for adolescent girls and 25 per thousand are at risk of developing a significant curve. Three girls per thousand require active treatment (spinal brace or surgery). Because in the early stages the condition is most often asymptomatic, screening in the ages range of 11-13 years is a sound preventative health measure.

The website www.scoliosis-australia.org contains credible information about scoliosis. Through the forum girls and their parents can obtain general advice from certified specialists who manage patients with spinal curvature. The forum is a useful resource in providing searchable information posted by its members regarding the different aspects of scoliosis. It offers a strong support base for adolescent patients with scoliosis and their parents. Healthcare professionals and other interested parties can discuss the NSDP in the forum.
ADOLESCENT SCOLIOSIS
SPINAL CURVATURE

The National Self-Detection Program

Information for schoolgirls in years 7 and 9 and their parents

A health promotion program recommended by the Spine Society of Australia.
The program is endorsed by the Paediatrics and Child Health Division of the Royal Australian College of Physicians.

WHAT IS Scoliosis?
Scoliosis is a lateral or sideways curve of the spine. The spine also rotates on its long axis as it curves. It usually develops during early adolescence (age 10-13 years) when growth is most rapid.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF SCOLIOSIS?
The cause is unknown, but 80-90% of cases occur in otherwise healthy adolescents. This is called idiopathic (cause unknown) scoliosis.

We know that scoliosis is NOT contagious and NOT caused by bad posture, a soft mattress, carrying a heavy school bag or junk food.

WHY IS EARLY DETECTION IMPORTANT?
While very small curves are common and of no significance, about 2% of girls have a curve which warrants medical observation during the growth period. Three girls per 1,000 will require treatment during the growth phase. If treatment is required, the earlier it is undertaken, the better the long-term result. This is the basis for screening since in the early stages scoliosis produces no symptoms. The way to detect scoliosis is to look for it.

WHY THIS BROCHURE HAS BEEN PRODUCED
This brochure is designed to make parents of schoolgirls aware of the outward signs of scoliosis. From time to time, all government and non-government schools in Australia will be asked to distribute this brochure from www.scoliosis-australia.org and to distribute it to girls in Years 7 and 9 (11 and 12 years of age in most states and territories).

HOW SCOLIOSIS IS DETECTED
Apart from the outward signs with a teenager standing as illustrated, the reliable Forward Bend Test is one of the diagnosis of scoliosis. This simple visual examination requires the teenager to stand with her feet apart and bend forward as far as she can go with the hands palm facing each other, pressed between the two big toes. In scoliosis, one side of the upper chest (thoracic) region or the lower back (lumbar) region will be more than 1 cm higher than the other. The prominence is most often on the right side in the thoracic region. If the difference between the two sides is less than 1 cm, it is highly unlikely that a significant curvature is present, and the difference is simply due to asymmetrical growth of the two sides of the body. This is called bony asymmetry and is of no significance.

WHAT ABOUT BROTHERS AND SISTERS?
Scoliosis tends to run in families. When a curve is detected in one member of the family, other children should also be examined by the family doctor. If there is a history of a blood relative, especially a female cousin, having been treated for scoliosis by brace wearing or surgery, then this strengthens the case for spinal examination as a regular health check between 10 and 13 years of age.

Scoliosis which requires treatment is far less common in boys than in girls. The ratio of boys to girls requiring treatment is about 1 to 10.

IS TREATMENT SUCCESSFUL?
Yes, modern methods produce excellent results when a curve is detected early. In most cases an inconspicuous spinal brace is worn. Surgery is needed in only one out of three cases which require treatment.

There is no scientific evidence that physical therapy (exercise programs) and spinal manipulation (chiropractic adjustments) will either correct a scoliosis or halt its progression.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF SCOLIOSIS IS NOT TREATED?
The curve may increase unnoticed during the growing years. Moderate and severe curves may also increase in adult life. Some curves may increase with pregnancy. Severe pain, physical deformity and wear and tear arthritis may occur during middle life. Early detection is important for a healthy future.

HOW DO YOU DETECT SCOLIOSIS?
Simply look for it!
It only takes 30 seconds.

Visit our website
www.scoliosis-australia.org

©Scoliosis Australia is a project of
The National Self-Detection Program is supported by

Medtronic
TWICE A TREAT IN THEATRESPORTS

On Thursday 6 June the Intermediate Theatresports team – Ellen Houghton, Lara Newman, Courtney Painter and Stephanie Vorreiter set out to compete in the Wild Card Heat at Canterbury Girls High. Out of the eight schools only one would continue onto the semi-finals. It was a wet and cold night but the team was in great spirits; they were excited and raring to go. These girls had one thing on their mind – to have fun, and fun they certainly had.

All their hard work, commitment and dedication paid off as they hit their mark after each game. In fact, during the third game, an open improvisation, they proved how great they were. This is the hardest of the four rounds. In this round there are no games to hang their improvisation on - it is just the team, on the floor, in front of an audience with a scenario. Well! They just belted it out of the park … or should I say … belted it off the stage! They scored the highest mark of the night - a triple 4! When the time came to announce the winner, and as each team’s score was announced, it became apparent that we had a chance. You could cut the air with a knife. Gosh these clichés are coming in hard and fast! Finally, Muirfield and Newtown Performing High School were the last two.

Drum roll – hang on that’s my heart beating! The result? We were runners up losing to Newtown by only one mark! The girls were ecstatic. They were so pleased to have come in second and what a team to be beaten by – the top performing high school in Sydney. But for me, the reward was seeing this team finish their first competition with strong skills, an amazing sense of teamwork and an intrinsic joy that is magic to watch. I am very proud to be their coach and drama teacher.

 Valerie Miller
**Head Teacher Senior Studies SLAP Term 3**

**Study**  
- Find 30 minutes in your week to read your notes from class. Do they make sense to you?

**Learn**  
- A new structure for writing a sentence. Examples are in the senior study area.

**Achieve**  
- Get something 100% correct by making the extra effort in a homework or class task.

**Progress**  
- Have a look at your work from one of your courses. Is it getting better over time?

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**Welcome to the first edition of the Senior Studies SLAP.**

Many students, staff and parents have asked two very simple questions; *what is it exactly that I do and why has this positioned been created?*

Put simply, the role focuses on the academic life of our senior students.

This in itself is unique, with few schools offering such targeted academic support.

**So why is this important?**

Research over the past decade has shown time and again that it is our high achieving senior students who have suffered the most from this lack of investment in our school system. In Northern Sydney region extending the top third of our cohort has been one of our top priorities.

It is for this reason that Muirfield has shifted the goal posts of what is possible. In creating this unique position Muirfield High School will be able to place greater emphasis on the academic needs of our senior students and build on our region topping growth in the junior school through the senior cohort.

**So what are some of the things we are doing to help improve student results in the senior years?**

Despite having only a few months to evaluate the systems and implement new strategies, we are retained excited by what we have planned and what we have achieved.

1. **Mentoring students, both individually and in small groups.**

   Many students have visited the senior studies office in the library to receive advice on how to create a study plan, manage their study periods at school, access Board of Studies support materials, and improve their extended writing. It is an open door policy - any student can seek out advice as they need it. Teachers have also referred students to help develop strategies to increase the outcomes and efficiency of their study time. This is especially important for our high achievers, who need to maximise their outcomes with narrow margins of error.

2. **Study Days**

   In Terms one and two all senior students were involved in workshops to help them plan their study time. Creating a study routine, managing mental health, inquiry learning and accessing digital
resources were some of the workshops presented.

Through these sessions we emphasised the importance of our students becoming masters of their content through self-regulated study. Flipping the conventional notions of teacher as content provider ensures that students research and acquire knowledge independently, leading to classrooms where skill development and feedback form the core of learning, resulting in higher outcomes for students. This leads into one of our major projects for 2014...

3. The Senior Study Challenge

Each week Year 12 students will be presented with a challenge that will help them improve the efficiency, range and depth of study. Drawing on Blooms Taxonomy and creative thinking strategies advocated by Tony Ryan and Keri Smith, these challenges will target areas for improvement and build the capacity of all our HSC students. Students who complete all the challenges will receive a certificate of achievement, and if the entire cohort receive a pass mark for the challenges a special “prize”, as determined by the year group, will be offered at their graduation.

4. Year 10 transition

A subject sampler day for Year 10 students on Friday the 9th of August is a new addition to our transition program. Students will now have the opportunity to sample 8 different courses on offer in our senior years to help them make a more informed decision on what options are right for them. This direct connection between subject, student and teacher will ensure the right expectations for senior studies are established before classes commence in 2014.

We are also busy identifying some of our academically gifted students in Year 10 and will be tailoring individualised learning plans that will help their transition into the senior school. Identifying the strengths and targeting the weaknesses of students through effective feedback to students and staff has a significant impact on student achievement. The gains for students through this process have been proven by educational researcher John Hattie. These initiatives, alongside the careers expo and our parent teacher and subject information evenings, help students make the right choices in this critically important transition period.

5. The Library

In the library we have created a resource area just for Year 12 textbooks and BOS support materials. Our sign on area now has a timetable with assessment dates for tasks and all course specific updates. New computers will help ease the resource strain during busy study periods and individual rooms will be available for groups of senior students to book for collaborative learning. We have created targeted writing scaffolds for students to read at the senior study desks to improve their extended responses. We have also made the library available to students for 30 minutes before and after school, Tuesday to Friday.

Lastly, I just want to thank students, staff and parents, for their warm welcome to Muirfield High School. The energy, enthusiasm and professionalism of everyone on staff has ensured our ideas have become reality.

Mathew Finley
Mathew.finley@det.nsw.edu.au
Subject Selection for Year 10 at the Western Sydney Careers Expo

Over 40 enthusiastic Year 10 students chose to attend the Subject Selection Session presented by Jennifer Michalski from the Board of Studies. Here is some of the advice she gave students on this fantastic day out:

Certifications and ATAR

- Record of School Achievement (RoSA) can be used for scholarship, TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship and overseas placement.
- The RoSA is a cumulative credential. You receive your RoSA whenever you choose to leave school and it will have the results of all your completed courses.
- You can sit a literacy and numeracy test, the result of which will appear in a credential on your certificate. The next test period is October 24-30 and you complete this online.
- In Year 12 you will get your Stage 5, Year 11 and Year 12 results on the certificate.
- Vet and Life Skills are not graded A-E.
- You will be able to add your extra-curricular records as well.
- 2 units equal four hours per week. 2 units equals 100 marks. 1 unit is 50 marks.
- Preliminary minimum is 12 units and HSC 10 units.
- Of your 10 units you need 6 board developed units to get a HSC. You need 10 units for ATAR.
- HSC is a profile of student achievement, however the ATAR is a rank compared to the rest of the state. Provides the information Universities need to make selections.
- Each University has different bonus points systems. For example, School Captains can receive 1 bonus mark for their ATAR at UNSW. At University of Western Sydney you can receive bonus marks depending on where you live. Find out what bonus marks you can receive for the Universities you wish to study at.

Selecting and Studying Courses

- All My Own Work must be completed before you are enrolled in Year 11.
- When selecting a course consider these 4 questions: What am I good at? What do I enjoy doing? What do I need to do? What is my career path?
- Choose the subjects you are best at and ask for advice. The Board of Studies asks you to consider, “Will I do better in Advanced or Standard English, not should I do Advanced English to get the best mark?”
- Do you know how much is practical and how much is written? Know what the components are.
- How much is completed at school and how much is assessed externally? How is that different?
- Do your best in what you love doing.
- Your PIN number will be given to you by the Board of Studies to access Students Online, where all your information and advice for the HSC is provided by the BOS.

A more detailed presentation of the HSC will take place at the Subject Information Evening on the 5th August.
**FROM THE P&C PRESIDENT**

- Congratulations to the P&C Fundraising committee for their successful Car Boot Sale! A respectable profit was made and enthusiasm for future such events generated.

- Congratulations also to Viveik Vinoharan, our boy vice captain who was nominated by the P&C for P&C Federation’s Student Achievement Award!! Viveik was the successful applicant and is to be presented with his award at the annual P&C Federation Conference dinner.

- Do you think that the P&C doesn’t need your help? Unfortunately we are desperately in need of volunteers. There are a significant number of people in the P&C whose children are leaving the school at the end of this year or next so we need some new blood. Your commitment doesn’t have to be enormous or onerous. It is up to you how much you do, but we would really appreciate your input. There is an advertisement below with the positions vacant, but we also need people to come along to P&C meetings or to attend sub-committee meetings. Please think about helping.

**Amanda Bartlett**

### Your P&C Needs You!

**Positions Vacant:**
- **Canteen Committee** - Secretary
- **Uniform Shop Committee** - Convenor
- **Computer Market Committee** - Convenor, Secretary

Please contact Amanda Bartlett on 9873 3197 or thebartletts@optusnet.com.au if you have any questions or would like to assist.

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**BBQ and Cake Stall**

**BBQ and Cake Stall** at Bunnings North Parramatta on Sunday 8th September.

Please deliver baked goodies such as cakes, slices, biscuits or savouries to school to the Bunnings Stall from 8am.

The stall needs volunteers to assist between 8am and 4pm. You can help out on the stall, feed your family and do your Bunnings shopping in 1 trip!

Contact Beth Mitchell on 0402 254 222 or bethels4@tpg.com.au to offer help.
ELECTION STALL

Once again we will be having a stall at school on election day. We will need lots of volunteers for our BBQ, Coffee, Cakes and Pancakes Stalls. Baristas welcome.

Please let us know now if you would like to help; we can confirm your availability when the election date is rescheduled.

Contact Beth on 0402 254 222 or bethels4@tpg.com.au

Dear P&C Associations

This correspondence is issued in relation to all District Council of Parents and Citizens Associations. P&C Federation would like to advise all P&C Association members that no District Council is to operate at this time. This is a temporary situation that will be remedied once issue are resolved with the support of the Department of Education and Communities and the Minister for Education’s Office.

It is appreciated that this is an inconvenience for proposed members however it is important that the Minister of Education is satisfied that the school areas identified are appropriate.

P&C Federation asks respectfully that you do not correspond or contact the Minister’s Office or Department of Education and Communities directly. All enquiries should be made to the General Manager P&C federation. Any enquiry to an external agency will be appropriately referred to P&C Federation.

Your continued contribution to your school community is appreciated.

Regards
Lyall Wilkinson
President
P&C Association

POSITION VACANT: UNIFORM SHOP MANAGER (JOB SHARE) CASUAL POSITION

The MHS P&C is looking for an additional Uniform Shop manager to assist our current shop manager.

The position is a job share position requiring approximately 1-2 hours per week, with more hours available in busy times such as Orientation Day and upon return to school in January.

Duties include opening the shop during lunchtime on the allocated day, ability to operate a cash register and EFTPOS facilities and perform banking duties. You will also be required to assist with stocktakes each term and attend monthly committee meetings.

Shop managers are paid in line with the current award and are responsible to the Uniform Shop committee.

This job would suit a parent who is not currently working or who is working part time and can spare a set day each week to come into school. Training will be provided by our existing manager.

If you would like further details about this position, please contact the school office.

The Uniform Shop Committee
Need a boost to your mid-year school budget?

The second payment of the Schoolkids Bonus is coming in July. If you are eligible you could receive up to $205 for each primary student and up to $410 for each secondary student.

You could receive the Schoolkids Bonus if you have a child in primary or secondary school and receive Family Tax Benefit Part A or you are a primary or secondary student receiving an income support payment.

If you think you are eligible and you haven’t already updated your child’s education details with Centrelink, then visit Online Services by 29 June 2013 to ensure you receive the correct amount and are paid on time.

The Schoolkids Bonus replaced the Education Tax Refund in January 2013 so eligible families cannot claim education expenses in their 2012-13 income tax return.

To ensure you receive the Schoolkids Bonus payment in July, check your eligibility by visiting australia.gov.au/schoolkidsbonus
The language of resilient families

Children and adults in resilient families tune into the needs of each other, choosing situation-specific language, rather than simply regurgitating generalised 'feel-good' or 'get-on-with-it' platitudes.

Kids who feel overwhelmed; kids who experience rejection; perfectionists
The ability to compartmentalise bad events and keep them from affecting all areas of life is a powerful coping skill. Sportspeople, politicians and others who work in the public arena need to be adept at it. When something unpleasant happens during recess, for example, kids need to park their thinking about that event so they can get on with the rest of the day. The ability to compartmentalise thinking is a fantastic life skill kids can learn within their family.

When kids are troubled by events or spend too much time brooding it helps to do something to get their minds off things for a time. Playing games, spending time together, watching some TV, going out – are all good distracters for worried, anxious or stressed kids. Self-distraction is healthy, providing some welcome perspective. It also prevents kids from replaying awful experiences in their heads, blowing them out of proportion.

4. "Who have you spoken to about this?" Strategy: seeking help Good for: kids who experience bullying and social problems; handling all types of personal worries.
Resilient people seek solace in the company of others when they experience difficulty. That’s why social connection is such a strong preventative strategy for young people. The promotion of help-seeking behaviours is one of the best coping strategies of all. Even if kids don’t overtly talk about what’s bothering them, it can be immensely reassuring to spend time around others who are empathetic, understanding and willing to listen and help.

5. "I know it looks bad now but you will get through this." Strategy: offering hope Good for: kids experiencing loss, bullying, change or extreme disappointment.
There are times when parents can do nothing else but keep their children’s
chins up and encourage them when life doesn’t go their way. Being the ‘hope’ person can be hard work, that’s why parents need to be supported by resilient people and workplaces too. It helps to be mindful that a child or young person’s resilience is nurtured by the presence of at least one supportive adult. You may have to be that person!

6. “What can you learn from this so it doesn’t happen next time?” Strategy: positive reframing
- **Good for:** Kids who make mistakes, let others down or experience personal disappointment

One of the common attributes of optimistic people is their ability to find a learning, or look for a message, in difficult or negative situations.

Parents can help kids reframe events to help them see things differently. For instance, rather than regarding a public speaking opportunity as problematic and a chance to look foolish it’s better to reframe it as a challenge and a chance to shine. It also helps when parents model reframing so kids see you changing how you view seemingly negative or worrying situations.

7. “Don’t worry – relax and see what happens!” Strategy: acceptance
- **Good for:** Kids who worry about exams or performing poorly in any endeavour; pessimists.

If you’ve ever been driving to an important event only to be stuck in traffic then you would know that there are some situations you just can’t control. The only way to cope is to accept what’s happening because worrying and fretting won’t get you anywhere. Similarly, parents with a resilient mindset can help kids understand what’s worth worrying about and what’s not, and that some things won’t change no matter how much kids fret or beat themselves up!

8. “This isn’t the end of the world” Strategy: maintaining perspective
- **Good for:** Kids who catastrophise or blow things out of proportion.

While most of us catastrophise at times, jumping to the worst possible conclusion, it is a habit that only exaggerates anxiety. When kids constantly think the worst case scenario, challenge their views. “Yes, you could end up not knowing anyone at camp but you won’t be the only one. Besides you’ll probably end up making new friends like you generally do.”

9. “You could be right. But have you thought about...” Strategy: flexible thinking
- **Good for:** Kids who catastrophise, experience extreme feelings; who exaggerate.

Many children and young people talk in extremes – ‘awesome’, ‘the best’, ‘the worst’ and ‘gross’ roll off their tongues easily these days. Unfortunately, their extreme language leads to extreme emotional responses. Develop the habit of winding back their language by introducing shades of grey, rather than black and white. Replace “I’m furious” with “I’m annoyed”. “It’s an absolute disaster” with “It’s a pain.”

“I can’t stand it” with “I don’t like it”. Realistic language leads to realistic thinking, which helps kids handle many ordinary situations that they have blown out of proportion.

10. “What can we do about this?” Strategy: taking action
- **Good for:** Kids who moan; who experience disappointment; who feel inadequate.

Kids can sometimes feel overwhelmed by events such as constant failure, constant rejection or always narrowly missing being picked for a team. They can be overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy and helplessness. Action is often the best remedy. Help them take the first step forward. Set some goals. Make some plans. Identify the first step and hold their hand while they take it. Taking action is a quality shared by resilient communities, organisations and individuals.

**Bring resilience into your every day language**

Resilient parents focus on building children’s and young people’s strengths for the future, while helping them cope with the present difficulties and challenges they experience.

The key to promoting resilience lies in the language that parents use. My challenge for parents is to make resilience an integral part of your family’s proprietary language. You’ll know you have succeeded if your children as adults remind you, when they hear any complaints or whinges from you in your dotage, to ‘hang in there’, ‘this too will pass’ and ‘find the funny side’. Granted they may be phrases you don’t want to hear, but at least you know that you’ve drummed into your kids some important core messages that have stayed for life.

Michael will talk more about Resilience and other vital parenting matters in the Very Important Parenting Saturday seminars conducted in 5 Australian capital cities in term 3 this year. Find out more about what’s been called the Parenting Event of the year at parentingideas.com.au
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Synthetic Drugs in our community

Essential information for parents, carers and professionals on the effects of drugs and alcohol on young people. Not to be missed!

Featuring Paul Dillon, keynote speaker and author of best selling book for parents, Teenagers, Alcohol and Drugs released in 2009. Paul is a nationally recognised drug education specialist with 25 years experience in the field. Paul regularly appears in the media and is regarded as a key social commentator.

The night will be hosted by David Coller, Manager of the KYDS Youth Development Service.

Q&A panel featuring NSW Police, NSW Health and other industry professionals to provide valuable insight into synthetic drugs and answer your questions.

Where: Hornsby RSL (main showroom) 4 High Street, Hornsby
When: Wednesday 21 August
Time: 7.00pm to 9.00pm
RSVP: Please call Paul Stuart on 9477 8729 or email pscott@nsw.com.au

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Hills District Little Athletics

welcomes children aged 5 (tiny tots) - 17 to join in family fun and fitness with Little Athletics

Register and pay online prior to collecting your pack at http://www.laansw.com.au from 1 August 2013

Pack Collection Days for 2013/14 season

will be held on

Friday 16th August 6pm – 8pm
Sunday 25th August 10am – 2pm
at A.H. Whaling Reserve
Roxborough Park Road, Baulkham Hills

Please note
No actual registrations will be taken on these days

New athletes will be required to provide proof of age when collecting their packs. Please bring Birth Certificate, Blue Book or Passport

Season commences 8am Saturday 7th Sept 2013

For further enquires see the FAQ section on our website www.hillsdistrict.org
or contact
Sophie 0422 319131 or Jenny 0407 226 325

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Play cricket this summer

Beginners and experienced girls and boys welcome

Registration Day: 4th August between 10am and 2pm at
Carlingford Bowling Club

Cnr Pennant Hills Rd & Evans Rd Carlingford
Contact Michael Barry on 0439 482 625 for more information.
Summer Softball Competitions
Teeball to A-Grade to Ladies
For Girls from 5 years
Season September to March
Juniors Play Saturday Mornings, School Terms only
Games are Same Time and Place Each week
No Games during School Christmas Holidays
Registration includes free uniform for juniors
Early Bird registration ends 31st July 2013
School friends catered for
Come and Try Day
12.30 - 2pm Sunday 28th July
Held at the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children
(Enter off Baden Powell Drive, off Barclay Rd)
North Rocks
For further information please call,
Club President, Scott Kemp 0418 555 633
or visit www.northrockssoftball.org.au

Come & Try Day
New to baseball or softball?
Or just hanging out for some Sunday family fun?
Then come down to the Tigers’ Come and Try day!
Try out your skills, play a friendly game, enjoy our BBQ and meet our friendly Tigers!

Date: Sunday 21st July
Time: 12:00pm
Venue: George Kendall Park, Ermington

Registrations and info: www.tigerball.com.au