Principal's Report

Welcome to our new students and families and welcome back to our existing students and families. I hope everyone has had a trouble-free and relaxing holiday and that all our students are ready to apply themselves to their fullest in their studies this year.

A lot has happened over the break and is continuing to happen as we start the year. In particular:

Welcome to new Staff
I would like to welcome the following new permanent staff to the school:
- Mr. Gervase Bertus – Deputy Principal
- Ms. Erin Taylor – English teacher
- Ms. Grace Morris – HSIE teacher
- Mr. Scott Smith – who has transferred into a PDHPE teaching position
We also have a number of teachers with us for the year, temporarily filling positions vacant due to staff leave:
- Ms. Bridget Rook – CAPA/LOTE
- Ms. Kirrin Singh – HSIE
- Ms. Alexis Tamp – Maths
- Ms. Julie Thurgood – HSIE
Welcome to all these staff.

School Improvements
There have been a couple of major capital works projects begin construction over the break. Construction is well underway to complete the mezzanine level and dance floor in the new High Performance Sports Centre. Construction is almost complete on a shaded area for year 12 students behind the canteen. This project was funded jointly of P&C funds and donations from previous year 12 groups.

Enrolments
There has been a significant increase in school enrolments at Grafton High School this year. Last year we created an additional year 9 class to cater for increased enrolments. This year we have also had to create an additional year 7 class. At present, there are a small number of vacancies available in all years, with the exception of year 9, which has very little room. I am required to reserve the remaining places in year 9 for local students within the school’s drawing area boundaries so any non-local students applying for enrolment are now being placed on a waiting list.

Our increase in enrolments is a reflection on our staff and students, their hard work, then pride in the school and the positive impression created in the community.

Uniform
Part of the positive impression that our students create in the community is a direct result of them wearing the correct school uniform as well as their conduct whilst wearing this uniform. Our current uniform was reviewed at the end of 2012 after significant consultation with students, parents and staff through surveys and uniform committee meetings. As such, it is important that students wear the correct uniform. If a student is out of uniform it is also expected that they bring a note, signed by a parent or carer, explaining the reasons for their being out of uniform. Where this occurs, no student will be disciplined or lose any privileges. However, students who repeatedly attend school out of uniform without a note and good reason will be spoken to and miss out on certain privileges such as attending school discos or representing the school in various non-mandatory activities. I appreciate the ongoing cooperation of parents in supporting the school’s uniform policy.

LMBR Finance
As I mentioned several times near the end of last year, Grafton High School is part of a state-wide pilot for the implementation of a new state-wide computer system that will manage all finances and student administration. We are currently experiencing significant difficulties, beyond the control of the school, with the finance aspect of this system. The result is that we are having difficulties with the receiving of payments from parents and payments to our suppliers, which are all now managed centrally. I am again asking that parents/carers please be patient with office staff, as we are doing our best to overcome these issues. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of all our admin staff as they work through this new system.

P&C Meeting
The first P&C meeting for the year will be held on Thursday 27th February at 7:00 pm in the staff common room. All parents are most welcome.

Peter South - Principal
Student Absences
A reminder that it is a government requirement that all student absences be explained by a signed note or phone contact with the office. It is also important that students who intend leaving school early, for reasons such as to attend a doctor’s appointment etc, bring a parent note explaining the partial absence and present this to the attendance desk at the front office before OnTrac starts each day. Students will then receive an early leavers slip as proof that they have permission to leave school early.

Upcoming Events:
12/02 Swimming Carnival
25-26/02 School Photos
13/03 Selective High School Test

Grafton High v Coffs High
YOU could never accuse Kaitlin Pardoe of resting on her laurels.

After smashing an impressive 72 not out against Woolgoolga last week the Grafton High School opening bat produced another match-winning performance against Coffs Harbour in the North Coast under-14 Girl’s Final at J J Lawrence field on Thursday.
Pardoe remained unconquered on 72 to guide her side to a commanding 108-run victory.

Batting first, Pardoe and Courtney Fuller © (29 not out) combined to set up an imposing 162 from their allotted 20 overs.
Pardoe was particularly harsh on the short ball while up the other end Fuller pounced on anything remotely loose.

In reply, Coffs were bundled out for just 54 with Pardoe (3-6) and Meg Porra (3-9) doing most of the damage with the ball.

Coffs Harbour’s representative opening bat Matilda Lugg (17) looked set for a big score until she speared a catch straight to Samira Lawson at cover. And with Lugg back in the sheds Coffs' hopes quickly evaporated.

Lawson was brilliant in the field snaring three catches to help spark a middle-order collapse. At one stage the visitors lost five wickets for just six-runs as Pardoe and Porra cleaned up the tail with seven-overs still remaining.

V Nichols

TAFE Peer Tutor Presentation
An award ceremony was held late last term to recognise the achievements of our wonderful Peer Tutors. The fifteen students received a Statement of Accreditation from TAFE presented by Cate Worboys, Head Teacher Literacy. Mr South also presented certificates which acknowledged the contribution that the Year 10’s have made towards increasing literacy skills of our Year 7 students as well as fulfilling the important role of mentor. The efforts of the Year 7 students were also recognised; significant improvements have been made as a result of their commitment during 2013. Several Year 7 students were recognised for having completed the Mullilitt Program and aspects of Djehuti Maths. Congratulations to all students involved in these programs, we look forward to more great achievements in 2014.

Mrs McLenna

Community Notices

Public Courses
‘Teenspeak ‘ class will be held on Thursdays from 6.00 - 7.00pm

Dr. Kati Jacobs received her formal training in Speech and Drama in the U.S . She is also recognised internationally as a speaker and seminar facilitator on various topics about business and personal growth.

In 2014 at CVCon, Kati will be running a class in Public Speaking called ‘Teenspeak’. Through activities and discussions this will encompass delivery of speeches, how to move in front of others, what to do with your hands whilst speaking, posture and dress, creating powerful powerpoint presentations, (not a computer class), how much text to write on each slide, planning an effective presentation, preparing for job or other interviews, presenting yourself with confidence, creating positive first impressions in an interview.

‘Screentime’ (Film & TV) for Years 7 - 12 on Tuesdays from 4.30 - 5.15pm.

Desan Padayachee has a Bachelor of Theatre Arts from USQ and is currently studying a Bachelor of Teaching (Drama) at Charles Sturt University via Distance education. Desan has acted with theatre companies in Sydney and has acted in episodes of Heartbreak High and All Saints. Desan will also be teaching ‘Character Creations’ (Stage & Screen) for Years 3 - 6 on Tuesdays from 3.30 - 4.15pm

These courses are being held at Clarence Valley Conservatorium starting Feb 3. It will cost $14.50 per week plus admin fee. Ring 6643 3555 to book.