Principal's Report

It has been an extremely busy last few weeks that has seen the newsletter delayed as we work on preparing yearly reports and managing the busy time leading up to the end of year (with only 37 days until Christmas).

Every year I have the privilege of attending a number of school events that showcase how our students have developed academically and culturally. I also have the opportunity to witness our students develop and grow socially, something that is very evident each year when I attend our Year 12 formal, as I did last Thursday evening. It was a privilege to see how our students have grown into adults over the last 6 years of schooling. I really enjoy watching students celebrate this achievement with their family and friends. My part in the evening is to give as brief a speech as I can so that I don't get in the way of this celebration. The job of the Year Adviser is to give a speech that reflects on the journey that the students have taken over these 6 years; the reason we are celebrating. Our Year 12 Adviser, Aaron Hartmann, performed that role perfectly last Thursday evening, with a very genuine and moving speech that highlighted just how much a part of the growth of these students he and the school have been. I particularly want to acknowledge the work that Mr Hartmann has done over this time and, more recently, the work of his assistant Year Adviser, Miss Allibon.

National School Chaplaincy Programme

With very short notice, schools were recently invited to place expressions of interest with the Department of Education for the employment of a School Chaplain. The National School Chaplaincy Programme has been running for several years now and involves the Federal government funding the employment of a School Chaplain at a school. This is an additional resource that can be used to support the social development and mental wellbeing of our students. It is not a counselling position but would allow another port of call for students, especially during times of stress and upset, such as the school experienced recently with the passing of several current and ex-students. Whilst, ideally, I am sure that most Principal's would say that schools would benefit more with funding going towards additional qualified school counselling services (all school counsellors are qualified Psychologists), under the circumstances it is clear to me that our students would never the less still benefit from such a position. The requirements related to this position are fairly strict. In particular, the program requires that a School Chaplain:

- does not proselytise;
- is respectful, accepts and is sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs;
- complies with State and Commonwealth laws and policies in relation to child protection matters;
- meets the NSCP's minimum qualification requirements.

Given the possible benefits to the school and the fact that the funding would otherwise be wasted if we didn't use it, the Head Teacher Welfare, Mrs Nichols, and I have submitted an application for funding for this position on behalf of the school. This application is for funding in 2016-2018 only. Please note that NSW is administering this program on behalf of the Commonwealth and, as such, that participation for 2016-2018 cannot be confirmed until Commonwealth funding is guaranteed.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

At this time of the year we are also in the process of deciding who is eligible to attend the annual Rewards Excursion for each year group. I would like all students and parents to be aware that from 2016 onwards we will be implementing a new process for determining whether a student’s behaviour and commitment has been satisfactory enough for them to be able to participate in non-mandatory excursions and extracurricular activities. This process will involve a pre-participation eligibility checklist. Once a student is deemed eligible they would remain in the activity unless they are currently on suspension or commit a serious act that is contrary to responsible student conduct. This would give certainty to a team once they begin competing in a competition and provide an incentive for students to continue to “do the right thing”. I will provide further details in coming weeks so that students and parents are fully aware of the expectations prior to the new year.

Peter South – Principal
Spot on Coffee Excursion

Recently the SPOT on Coffee Team of Shania Compton, Jessie Gibson, Maddy Sheehan, Jayde Timmins and Kain Wilson attended a very interesting and educational excursion to Botero Coffee Cafe at Maclean.

On arrival the group were greeted by Mason Dow, the Administration Manager, who made us all feel very welcome.

First up, all enjoyed a hearty lunch with all our budding baristas making an interesting liquid refreshment choice. Our crew, who brew, all opted for a thick shake. Perhaps a caramel latte is not their favourite drink.

Next the team had an informal but informative chat with Duncan the barista on duty. He demonstrated how he creates certain beverages and reminded the students of the importance of checking the grinding throughout a shift, as the room heats up. He outlined the reasons he loves his job and told of his inspiring journey from a waiter at Botero, to his present role of café manager.

After this, a visit to the roasting area was taken. Jayc was our tour guide. He pointed out the huge bags of coffee that are exported from all around the world and outlined the roasting process. He also demonstrated how the different beans are mixed together to construct the wonderful product ‘Brass’ that we have used since 2011 to create our awesome coffees. We witnessed the bagging process and observed where the completed product was stored, awaiting delivery to customers.

Finally Mason returned and escorted the group upstairs to the administration area. We were shown where all incoming calls were received and new orders processed. The field trip was a great success and all at Botero commented on how well the Spot on students behaved and presented themselves. They were fine ambassadors for Grafton High School. The team would like to thank Mr Barnier and Mr McArthur for organising the trip and providing transport.

Mr McArthur
Parent and carer information evening

- Factual information about youth mental health
- Practical information about how parents can talk to young people about mental health and distress
- A space for parents to ask questions and voice concerns
- Information and skills for supporting young people going through grief
- Information on building resilience in young people.

This information session is available to parents and carers only. Spaces are limited so please RSVP by ringing 66421466.

When
Wednesday 18th November, 6:00-7:30pm

Where
Grafton Library, 126-144 Pound Street
Grafton NSW 2460

Contact
Please RSVP to South Grafton High School on 6642 1466. Any enquiries regarding the presentation can be directed to the Grafton High School counsellors — Chrissy Lasker or Judy Dougherty
EXPAND YOUR MIND ON MENTAL HEALTH

WHEN
Saturday 21st November

WHERE
GRAFTON HIGH MPC HALL
97 MARY STREET, GRAFTON

FROM 9AM

FEATURING GUEST SPEAKER FROM

BLACK DOG INSTITUTE

ALSO FEATURING

YOGA DEMONSTRATIONS
EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST
ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKER
OTHER GUEST SPEAKERS ON THE DAY

BENEFITING
THE WHOLE CLARENCE VALLEY COMMUNITY

Tea, coffee and food provided.
Contact Person
Cherie Power
0437242557

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