Wednesday, 25 March 2015

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**Principal’s Report**

Congratulations to our nineteen Year 11 debutantes and their partners for another highly successful Deb Ball. As is always the case, this event would not have gone ahead without the support of P&C and the hard work and organisation of school staff, parents and students. I want to acknowledge the work of Ms Adamson and Mr Nagle, as well as Mr Rutledge and Mrs Merry. I particularly want to thank Mrs Shirley Kelly from our front office, who yet again was an enormous assistance with the organisation for the evening. Of course, the evening is about dancing and so it would not have been possible without our dance instructors Peter Kleindienst and Melissa Makings. Most of all, I want to thank Mrs Karen Crispin for her management of the event. I am sure you will agree from the photo below that our Year 11 Debutantes and their partners looked outstanding.

**Special Education in Ethics**

The Department of Education recently altered its enrolment forms to allow parents to select if they wish to have their child provided with Special Education in Ethics (SEE) classes rather than participating in Special Religious Education (SRE) classes. This has caused some confusion amongst parents, myself included. I want to clarify that Ethics classes are only available to Primary School students and only where an approved deliverer is available. High School students are provided with the opportunity to attend SRE classes as part of their timetable. If a parent does not wish to have their child participate in these classes then they need only provide a note indicating this and their child will be placed with an alternate class for that time. We are very lucky at Grafton High School, through the support of our local church groups, to have Mr Josh Taylor full time at the school as our SRE teacher. Most students participate in and enjoy SRE lessons and Mr Taylor is actively involved with our students in sporting and other extracurricular activities at the school.

**P&C AGM & Election BBQ**

A reminder that the P&C will be holding its annual general meeting this Thursday 26th March, starting at 7 pm in the Staff Common Room. The AGM will be immediately followed by the regular P&C meeting.

As mentioned previously, the P&C is also running a BBQ outside the MPC on Election Day, this Saturday. The MPC is a poling centre so please support the school P&C by dropping in for a sausage sandwich while you are out and about voting on Saturday.

**Explaining Absences**

Thank you to those parents responding via SMS to the SMS notifications of absence. Rest assured that we do receive these messages and they are being recorded. It is timely that I remind parents that attendance of a child at school is mandatory by law and so parents are responsible for explaining any student absence within 7 days. A valid explanation for the absence must be given. Acceptable reasons for absence include illness, medical and dental appointments, funerals and so on. Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence include: birthdays, shopping, going to the council library and so on.

*Peter South - Principal*
Chromebook Launch

(From the Year 7 Digital Learning Newsletter)

As a key part of the school’s focus on digital learning, we will start next term on Monday 20th April with our school development day for teachers focussed on further professional learning on the use of Chromebooks in the classroom. Also on Monday, from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm, we will be hosting a “Meet the Chromebook” evening for year 7 parents, where they can come along and have a play with one of the same Chromebook computers their child will be using. We will give parents a quick introduction to the device, where they can then have a hands-on experience with the sorts of applications and digital learning experiences that their children will take part in.

On the first day back for students, Tuesday 21st April, all year 7 will spend the day at a Chromebook “Boot Camp”, where every lesson in the day will involve students being taught how to properly use their devices for learning and for organising their work. Students will also be asked to sign a Digital Device Acceptable Use Agreement that will detail the rules and requirements around the appropriate use of these devices. These agreements will then need a parent signature and be returned to school so that the students can begin using their devices connected to the school network.

Mrs Martin

Interim Reports and Meet The Teacher Afternoon

Interim reports for Years 7-11 will be issued to students this Thursday, the 26th of March. The following Tuesday afternoon, the 31st of March, there will be a Meet the Teacher afternoon. This is an opportunity for parents and guardians to get to know the teachers of their children. This will take place at Grafton High in D Block (Mary St entrance). It will commence at 3:30 and conclude at 6:00pm.

No bookings are required for this afternoon. If you are unable to attend, please contact your child’s teacher to arrange an alternate time. The preferred method of contact is via the school email (grafton-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au) and attention to the teacher concerned.

PBL Update

It has been a very exciting week for PBL. We had another winner of the SHARE draw to add to the ranks. The latest winner was Benjamin Baker-Whalley of Year 7. Big congratulations to Benjamin who won a $20 City Beach voucher for exemplifying the values of Grafton High. Again, a massive thank you must go to Grafton Shoppingworld for their continued support with such fantastic prizes!

Our new fortnightly focus is on stopping bullying/reporting bullying. We will be holding an OnTrac lesson this week with a focus on this to encourage students to squash bullying in our school.

Let’s all work together to stamp out bullying at Grafton High.

Mr Townley

Wicked Excursion

The CAPA department has been busy with an exciting excursion to make most green with envy. On Wednesday the 18th of March, 56 students boarded the bus bound for Brisbane’s Lyric Theatre to see the musical ‘Wicked’. This musical is the untold story of the witches of Oz and sees a different spin given to a classic tale.

The students that attended were a mix of Music and Drama students and it was a great opportunity for them to see exactly what is involved in a musical. The musical was excellent and all the students thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

After the musical, the students were treated to a special post performance presentation. This was presented by the stage manager of the musical, who also performed in the show as the Wizard. This presentation gave students the chance to see how the different aspects of the production came together. It also allowed them to ask questions about the production.

The excursion was extremely enjoyable and beneficial for the students to see what is involved in a musical. It also inspired them for our upcoming musical production.

A special thanks must go to the students. The students were on their best behaviour and represented Grafton High School perfectly.

Mr Townley

Practical Support for Higher School Certificate Examinations

Included in this newsletter is a note to parents and students outlining the Board of Studies’ program of provisions which provides practical support for students, where required, in the HSC examinations. This support assists students to read and respond to examination questions. These may be required because of learning, visual, hearing or medical difficulties.

Provisions are also made to assist students in their assessments and exams at school; these include Mid-Course, Yearly and Trial HSC Exams. If parents or students have any concerns about their child or themselves receiving this support for either the HSC or school exams, please contact the Year Adviser, School Counsellor, class teacher or the Learning and Support Teachers.

Further information about provisions for the HSC can be found at the following site:

Mrs McLennan
Learning and Support Teacher
Anti-Bullying Assembly:
In line with our current PBL focus, we held an Anti-Bullying assembly on National Anti-Bullying Day (20th March) and it was a huge success. This assembly was run entirely by the students for the students. We had the School Captains and Vice Captains give a talk on bullying and the effects it can have on students. Whilst this was happening, the SRC were distributing Anti Bullying wristbands to the student body to remind them that we say NO! to bullying at Grafton High.

We were also treated to a drum performance focusing on bullying and its effects. This was put on by the Year 11 Drama class and was quite powerful. We had two students, Caitlyn Roberts and Jasmine Murdoch, volunteer to talk to the student body on how to deal with bullying.

After this, we finished the assembly with the Year 10 Cultural Discoveries class given a talk on Harmony Day. This was done well and reinforced the value of Acceptance within Grafton High School.

The assembly was successful and hopefully showed the students the power of their words and actions. At Grafton High, we promote an accepting environment and say NO to bullying.

Mr Townley
PBL Coordinator

Rowing Report
Grafton High school was well represented at the 2015 Combined High Schools (CHS) regatta, with 12 students traveling to Taree to compete over the weekend of 13th - 15th March.


DOUBLE SCULL EVENTS: Emma Waterhouse and Abbey Counsell placed 3rd in their WU15 heat coming 6th in the final. Adam Pryor and Max Van Haren placed 1st in Championship Mens' heat. Due to inclement weather the Championship Men's double final was cancelled. Jordan Smith and Riley Oseland finished 5th in their Championship Men's heat. Grace Moar and Emily Ashenden placed 4th in WU 17 heat.

Upcoming Events:

**TERM 1**
Week 9
23/03-02/04 HSC Mid-Course Exams
26/03 Year 7 Immunisations, P&C AGM

Week 10
23/03-02/04 HSC Mid-Course Exams
02/04 Last Day Term 1
03/04 Good Friday

**TERM 2**
Week 1
20/04 Staff Development Day
21/04 All students Return
21-24/04 Year 12 Science Excursion to Sydney

Week 2
27/04-01/05 Work Placement VET Metal
29/04 Drama Day

Week 3
5/04 Stellar Role Model Career Day Yr 10
6/05 Cyber Space Presentation

Week 4
12-15/05 NAPLAN Yr 7 & 9

Week 5

18-22/05 Year 7-10 Mid-Course Exams
19/05 ICAS Digital Technology
Week 6
28/05 Police Talks Year 8
29/05 Athletics Carnival
Week 7
3/06 ICAS Science Assessment
4/06 Year 7 Immunisation
5/06 Year 11 & 12 Immunisations
Week 8
8/06 Queens Birthday Holiday
11/06 Police Talks Year 8
11/06 SLAM Poetry workshop Year 9-11
Week 9
18/06 Stellar The Great Year 8 at GHS
Week 10
22/6 NAIDOC Flag Raising
22-26/6 NAIDOC Week
24/06 Dirty Dancing
26/06 NAIDOC Touch Football & BBQ
26/06 Last Day Term 2

**TERM 3**
Week 1
13/7 Staff Development Day
14/7 School resumes all students.
16/7 Sydney Quilt Show Year 11
Week 2
22/7 Opportunity Class Placement Test
23/7 Police Talks Year 9
23/7 Stellar Year 7 Recipe For Success
Week 3
28/7 ICAS English Assessment
30/7 Australian Maths Competition
Week 4
3-14/8 HSC Trial Examinations
4/8 Year 10-11 Ski Trip
6/8 Police Talk Year9
Week 5
11/8 ICAS Mathematics
13/8 Bangara Dance Excursion Brisbane
Week 6
18/8 Police Talks Year 10
Week 7
Week 8
7-18/9 Final Preliminary Exams Year 12
Week 9
18/9 Last day of Term 3

**TERM 4**
5/10 Public Holiday
6/10 School resumes all students.
Practical Support for Higher School Certificate Examinations

Information for Students and Parents

The Board of Studies has a program to help students with practical support in their Higher School Certificate examinations. This practical support, known as provisions, assists students to read examination questions and to write their answers. Provisions include rest breaks and extra time. The use of any provision is not written on the student’s results.

Students may need provisions for:
- a permanent condition, such as diabetes or reading difficulty
- a temporary condition, such as a broken arm, or
- an intermittent condition, such as back pain when sitting for long periods.

It is not embarrassing to apply for or use provisions. More than 5000 HSC students apply for provisions each year. Provisions help students to show the markers what they know and can do.

To apply for provisions, the school submits an online application to the Board of Studies. This application tells us which provisions the student is requesting and includes recent evidence. Evidence may include medical reports, reading results, spelling results, writing samples and teacher comments.

Much of the evidence can be collected by the school, but the parents’ role is welcome and needed. Parents help by talking with the school, describing the student’s needs, and providing the school with medical or other reports.

Applications for provisions should be submitted by the school to the Board of Studies by the end of Term 1. Late applications are accepted for an emergency, such as a broken arm, until the time of the examinations.

Once the Board of Studies has made a decision about which provisions are approved or declined, a decision letter is provided to the school. The school will provide the student with a copy of the letter.

If you or the school are not satisfied with the Board’s decision, it is possible for the school to lodge an appeal. Appeals must state why the Board’s decision is unsuitable and must include new evidence to support the appeal.

If you think that you or your child may require support in completing the Higher School Certificate examinations, please discuss the matter with the Year Adviser, School Counsellor or teacher.