Friday, 29 January 2016
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• Welcome Back

Principal's Report
Welcome back to all staff, students and parents. I hope you have all had a safe and happy holiday. This term is a busy one and you will see below that this is particularly the case for Year 7. Our first big school event will be the swimming carnival on Tuesday 9th February. This is followed by our school photos on Wednesday 10th February. Further information about both these activities will be distributed to students. We have our first P&C meeting on Thursday the 25th February, from 7 pm in the staff common room (accessible via the front office) – all parents are welcome to attend. We have also had a number of new permanent staff appointments to the school:
• Caron Cherry – English Teacher
• Lisa Hill – Head Teacher Science
• Alyssa Feeney – Head Teacher CAPA
• Scott Barnier – Head Teacher Administration
• Stacey Martin – Head Teacher Teaching and Learning
• Lisa Ottosson – Support Teacher - Vision.

Welcome to Year 7
A big welcome to almost 180 new Year 7 students who started high school this week. There is a lot happening with Year 7 and there are a number of strategies we are using to help ease their transition to high school. We will be running a peer support program with Year 7 this year focussing on student resilience. This will involve Year 11 Peer Support Leaders who have been trained to facilitate sessions, under the supervision of a teacher. We also have the Year 7 area, a dedicated space with ample shade cover and seating, where no other year groups, other than Year 7, are permitted to loiter. Parents can assist by discussing with their child what they have done at school each day. This discussion can involve having the student go through their timetable and recounting what they did in each lesson and break. By way of explanation in relation to the student timetable, we have a two week cycle on our timetable. This means we have a week A and a Week B timetable that alternate every two weeks. To make it easier to work out which week we are in we start numbering the weeks from week one each term (we are at the end of week 1 now). Under this scheme, all odd numbered weeks are A weeks and even numbered weeks are B weeks.

Year 7 Chromebook Boot Camp Postponed
We have more than 80 parents who have already purchased Chromebook computers for their child. However, there has been a bit of a delay in some of these being delivered by JB HiFi due to supplier issues. As such, we have had to postpone the Year 7 Chromebook Boot Camp until Monday 8th January (Week 3). On this day all students will be issued their Chromebooks (those that were delivered to the school) or will need to bring along their own device if they purchased it elsewhere. Students who have not yet purchased a device will be loaned one for the day. Throughout the day students will have lessons on how to use their device properly and in particular how to use the different software applications that are included.
Proposed Changes to 2016 Term 4 School Development Day

The school is proposing that the last two days for staff this year, the school development days at the end of Term 4, be moved to 4 x 3 hour extended training and development sessions conducted on four afternoons during the year. This will allow for training to happen more regularly and at a time in the year where it can be followed up on, implemented and consolidated. Any staff that attend all the additional training sessions do not need to attend the last two days in Term 4. The dates proposed for the extended afternoon/evening sessions are: 1st March, 17th May, 16th Aug and 25th Oct. Please note that these changes should have no impact on students. Students are not required to attend the school development days and so will finish up on a Friday 16th December.

Progress on School Capital Works

We are very close to having the refurbishment of our two kitchens completed. It is expected that the Trade Skills Centre Kitchen and the refurbishment and upgrade of our other kitchen will be complete adequately for classes to start using from Week 3 of this term. Following this, there will still be major work undertaken in landscaping outside the rooms and in the construction of an alfresco dining area. We also have one of the computer rooms undergoing a major refurbishment and upgrade. This room should be operational by the middle of Term 1.

Peter South – Principal

The Great Aussie Bush Camp

An information note regarding this fantastic camp for Year 7 students was handed out at the Year 7 parent information evening and on Orientation Day last year. To help Year 7 settle in to High School as smoothly as possible we would like as many students as possible to attend this enjoyable and important camp. Camp dates are Wed 24th Feb (6am) to Fri 26th Feb. Due to the short timeline, it is important that all notes are returned as soon as possible as detailed below. Unfortunately, due to accommodation restrictions at the camp, there is a maximum number of students that are able to attend. Participation in the excursion will be closed as soon as that number of students is reached as indicated by return of the signed permission note to Mr Brown and full payment of $250 is made to the front office. First in best dressed approach!

If you wish your child to attend the camp please do the following:

1. Sign the school permission note and return it to Mr Brown as soon as possible or by Wed 3/2/16 (next Wednesday).
2. Full payment of $250 must be made to the front office by 12th Feb.
3. As soon as the signed school permission note has been returned, you child will be given a detailed Great Aussie Bush Camp permission note pack. You and your child need to return the completed documents as soon as possible or at the latest by Wed 17th Feb.
4. A final information note will be given out closer to the date.

We are really looking forward to the camp! Please return your school permission note as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions. We will call you back if we are unavailable at the time.

Mr Brown and Mrs Gorham - Year 7 Advisers

Cattle Yards Upgrade

The Agriculture Department wish to thank the school P&C for providing extra funds that allowed us to upgrade our cattle yards at the school farm. Greg Moss from Ace Bobcats helped complete the earthworks in a very efficient manner. We certainly appreciate the extra time and effort he put in and at a minimal additional cost.

We now have galvanised yards that will make it a safer and more up to date facility to use with our students who study Agriculture.

Please support the people who support our school. Thank you.

Keith Brown and Jon Kelemec - Agriculture teachers.

How to access this newsletter

At the start of each year we print out a hard copy of our first newsletter to ensure that student and parents new to the school receive a copy. Subsequent newsletters are not printed and given to each student. Instead, they are made available from the school website or else parents can nominate to have the newsletter emailed directly to them. I you would like a copy of each newsletter emailed to you, please email the school via the school email address: grafton.h.school@det.nsw.edu.au, and place the word “Newsletter” in the subject line of the email. This will allow office staff to add your email address to our newsletter email list.

If a parent does not have any access to email or the Internet, their child can pick up a hard copy of each newsletter from the front office.

Upcoming Events:

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