Principal’s Report

Dear Parents / Carers

We are very pleased with our 2015 HSC Students who have now completed their HSC exams and signed out of the school. They have worked hard and we look forward to excellent results in the near future. We want them to come to the school and tell us how they have gone at a special BBQ we will hold at the end of this year.

Exams are now complete for all other year groups and teachers are starting on students yearly reports. We wish students well and I am sure they are looking forward to the Christmas holiday break.

I hope to see our parents and students at this years Awards Night to be held on Tuesday 15th December, at Parramatta Leagues Club, at 630pm.

As the year draws to a close, I am pleased with the upgrade to areas of the school which we have achieved. The school hall will be painted and has all new improved lighting which should enhance all school productions.

DEC has granted Parramatta High School an additional $60,000 for painting and carpets. All classrooms are now complete with new paint and some with carpet. Blinds will also be upgraded in most rooms in the next few weeks. Hall furniture for students – chairs & exam desks have been totally replaced.

I would like parents / carers and students to note my disappointment over the number of incursions and excursions we have planned that have been cancelled this year. These events require much preparation on the part of the staff and are designed to enhance the curriculum students study. I hope parents and students reflect on this, and try a little harder in 2016 to participate in all our planned curricula.

Thanking parents again for the ongoing support you provide which helps us to support your child’s learning.

Yours faithfully, Ms. D. Splatt

CALENDAR

Yr 7 – 10 Assessments continue Week 5

Wednesday 4th November
- Engineering Excursion

Thursday 5th November
- 12 SAC Pip Excursion

Friday 6th November
- Year 12 2015 Sign out day
- Year 12 English Excursion

Monday 9th November

Tuesday 10th November
- Remembrance Day
- Science Valid Testing
- Girls in Sport Excursion

Wednesday 11th November
- Yr 12 Ext History Excursion – state library

Thursday 12th November
- Year 9 High Resolves

Friday 13th November
YEAR 12 BEAUTIFICATION TEAM

Many thanks must go to the Year 12 Beautification Team students for their commitment and energy given to the school over the past five years. Since year 8 students have volunteered on a weekly basis to keep our school looking pristine. They have worked to keep refuse under control, also weeded and watered gardens. Over a number of years they have also taken part in Keeping Australia Beautiful Day in Parramatta Park. We wish the students all the best for their future.

You are invited!

Year 12 HSC Parent Information Evening
Thursday 19th November, 5.30 – 6.30pm.
School Hall

We will be holding an information night for parents of students who are completing their HSC in 2016. A guest speaker from Headspace Parramatta will be in attendance and present information on how parents can assist their children in managing the stresses associated with senior school and suggest useful strategies. Information will also be presented on assessment and HSC procedures ensuring that parents are well informed and can support their children. Year 12, 2016 students have received a note informing you of this event. Could you please return the attendance slip to Ms. Williams as soon as possible.

We look forward to your participation in this evening.

GEOGRAPHY NEWS

At the end of Term 3, Year 9 Geography students had the opportunity to visit the culturally rich suburb of Cabramatta. This neighbourhood has a very interesting history due to the large migrant population residing in the area. Students had the chance to look into their surroundings and develop new skills they may find useful in their life and their studies. These skills were practiced in fun activities conducted throughout the day including mapping challenges, bearings exercises and incorporating grid and area reference to local maps. The grade gained more knowledge about the economy and history of suburb and at the end of the day, had the opportunity to explore the local food stores which offered a variety of Asian cuisines such as Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indonesian and Malaysian. Their knowledge of the area was then put into practice as part of an assessment task. The field trip was quite enjoyable as well as a great chance to learn more about a different area and it was definitely worthwhile.
Parramatta High School supports the Coo-ee March Re-enactment

On Monday 9th November our school community of Year 7 and 8 plus our Prefect body supported the Gligandra Sub-Committee as it participated in the 2015 re-enactment of the 1915 Coo-ee March the historical event. This event involved 26 marchers travelling by foot from Gligandra to Sydney, part of the 2015 Anzac centenary commemorations.

Students gathered along Pitt St to acknowledge this historical event and engage in conversation with the marchers. The Prefects then met with the group in Parramatta where they completed this leg of the procession.
Top 10 Tips for parents to manage and communicate expectations about schoolwork and results

Parents often have high expectations of their children in relation to how much homework they will do, and what results they will achieve in their studies. These expectations may result from cultural beliefs, personal experiences, desire for children to have better opportunities than their parents had and the like. Research shows that whilst parental expectations can play a significant part in children achieving high results, they can also contribute to high levels of student stress.

Some things to think about in relation to parental expectations include:

1. **Understand your own motivations:** Why do you want your child to do get particular marks in their studies? Is it because you have pressure from family/friends/society about what your child will achieve? Do you want them to follow in your career footsteps? Do you want them to have opportunities you never had as a child or young person? Understanding your own motivations will help you find balance in your expectations of your children.

2. **Help your children to set realistic goals:** Keep talking to your children about what they want to achieve, in individual subjects, at school overall and in other aspects of their life. Their career goals may mean they want to focus intensively on something like art or music, rather than maths or science. Helping them to identify their goals will enable them to determine what subjects they need to focus on and what marks they are likely to need, which means that effort can be concentrated on the areas which will help them to achieve their goals.

3. **Be involved in your children’s learning:** Throughout the term talk to your children about what they are studying. Ask them to show you their bookwork and homework. The more you understand about what they are doing and how they are going along the way, the better you will be able to set and manage your expectations.

4. **Make sure you really communicate what you expect:** Many students feel like they are not meeting their parents’ expectations. Often this is a result of poor communication about expectations by both parties. Reflect on your motivations (see 1 above) and think about how you communicate your expectations to your children. Remember to praise them for the effort they make rather than the results they achieve, this way they are motivated to keep on trying, even when learning is difficult.

5. **Develop an understanding of the school’s assessment and reporting structures:** Assessment and reporting systems change over time and are different in different schools, states and countries. Making sure you really understand what your children’s report means may help you to understand what they are actually achieving. Your school can explain these to you if need be. Sometimes students are excelling, but reporting structures don’t clearly represent this to parents.

6. **Remember nobody is perfect:** Even the brightest, most highly motivated child will struggle at times. They may struggle to understand a particular topic or concept, or they may struggle with motivation, particularly for a subject they don’t particularly enjoy. Problems with teachers or peers can also contribute. It is unrealistic that anyone can work with 100% effort all the time.

7. **Provide practical homework and exam support:** Provide practical help them to your children to enable them to access past papers or practise questions and work with them by things like proofreading and reviewing drafts, checking work and listening to speeches. Remember though, it is not your work, so don’t make changes, rather make suggestions and provide guidance.

8. **Spend time together doing something fun:** Make sure your relationship with your child is about more than homework and study. Allocate some time to do fun things together. This is the time in which your child is most likely to open up to you about the things that they are struggling with and you can work out how best to help them. Ideas include going for a walk or run together, registering for a team sport, having a dinner date or going to a gallery or museum.

9. **Support your child to do their best:** You can do this by providing healthy, nutrient rich food; opportunities for exercise, rest and relaxation and an environment which is supportive of and conducive to study.

10. **Keep alert for the physical and mental signs of stress:** Familiarise yourself with how your child responds to stress. Do they withdraw? Act out? Work harder or stop working? When you notice that your child is stressed provide them opportunities to discuss what is worrying them and work with them to identify how you can help them. You may wish to involve the school counsellor, a teacher or tutor at this point.