



Parkwood Progress

Parkwood Secondary College News

15 June 2009

Principal's Report

Departure

The longest time I have ever spent in a job with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has been my time as Principal at Parkwood Secondary College. The irony is that I came here for a short period after a period of turmoil at the school and with the intention of settling things before I moved on to another challenge. I have enjoyed the job so much, however, I stayed and it has been one of the most productive and satisfying periods of my career.

However, it is now time for a change. I will be leaving Parkwood at the end of this term to take on the challenges of Principal of Norwood Secondary College from the start of term 3.



Leadership Arrangements at the College

John Ballagh will take over as Acting Principal of the College from the start of term 3 and Jackie Harris will take on the responsibilities of Acting Assistant Principal. I have every confidence in these two people. They are skilled, energetic, enthusiastic and insightful.

MEC

The Maroondah Education Coalition has taken on a big project in reducing the number of secondary schools back from 7 to 5 in the Maroondah Local Government area. As I outlined in the last newsletter we envisage this will be achieved in part by building a new and refurbished school on the Parkwood site to replace and improve the current Parkwood and Norwood Secondary Schools.

It is anticipated that Croydon Secondary College and Maroondah Secondary College will also come together in new buildings on the Maroondah site. This rebuilding is a major, multi-million dollar project that is likely to take place in stages.

The rebuilding of a new school at Parkwood to accommodate the communities of Parkwood and Norwood is itself a major undertaking. I intend to continue to work, within the framework of the MEC, to ensure the best possible outcome is achieved for the current and future students who attend state secondary schools in North Ringwood. I hope, in that sense, to continue to work closely with Parkwood to strengthen and consolidate the links between Norwood and Parkwood in my new role as Principal at Norwood Secondary College.

Thanks

I am very grateful to the whole Parkwood community for the opportunity they gave me to lead the school. I would also like to personally thank some key people who have supported me and worked with me in my time at Parkwood.

Before I do that, however, I need to acknowledge the expertise, dedication and hard work of our School Council. They are the best school council I have ever worked with and one of the most effective councils in the state. The school is in good hands in their care.

I would like to thank Kevin Moon (past School Council President and current community member) and Johann Ferdinands (current School Council president) for their support, advice and guidance throughout my time as Principal. More than any others they have shared with me the burden and excitement of ensuring the success of our small school while at the same time working to secure its future.

I would like to thank Dot Henwood. Dot is now Principal at Heathmont Secondary College but was Assistant Principal at Parkwood for 5 of the years I have been here. She was an outstanding leader at Parkwood. Dot effectively managed the school through one of the most difficult periods in its history.

She was an outstanding assistant to me and her promotion to Principal at Heathmont College will significantly benefit that school.

I would like to thank Stuart Maile, our School Co-ordinator for his outstanding work over my period at Parkwood. Stuart is not only an outstanding teacher but also an excellent administrator and backstop who continues to ensure the school's orderly running on a daily basis.

I want to also acknowledge and thank Val Morelli for her support and her work on behalf of the school over more than 10 years. Val has been an outstanding teacher and leader, not only at school but also within the Maroondah Education Coalition.

Finally, thanks to our Business Manager and Manager of Non-Teaching staff, Margo Walton. Margo's work with School Council and myself in the management of our scarce resources has been outstanding. Margo is one of the quiet people who make the measurable success of our school and our students a reality and acknowledge and I thank her on behalf of all of our community.

Vin Virtue
Principal

Student ID Cards

Congratulations to the Student Leaders for recommending the introduction of Student ID Cards. As a result the college is now introducing Student ID Cards for the first time. All students are expected to purchase a card and should have already received a letter and payment form for a card. Spare copies of this letter are also available from the 'For Parents' section of the website also.

The cards cost \$4.50 and are great resource for the students. There are a number of benefits for the students in having a Student ID Card. These include:

- Clearly identifying the student as a member of Parkwood Secondary College.
- Functioning as a library card at the college.
- Proving their age if required out in the community.
- Ensuring they have some form of ID on them if needed or if their purse/wallet is lost.

If you have any queries regarding the student identification cards please contact John Ballagh at school anytime.

Calendar	
Week 9	
June 15:	Aiming High Triathlon
June 16:	Aiming High Radio Excursion
June 19:	Year 7 Sports Carnival
Week 10	
June 22-26:	Year 10 Work Experience
June 23:	Aiming High celebration evening Tertiary Information Session
June 26:	Last day of Term 2
Term 3, Week 1:	
July 13:	School returns for Term 3



New Excursion Procedures

All families will have received a letter home in the mail outlining new excursion procedures for Semester 2, 2009. The aim of these changes is to make communication and payment processes simpler and more efficient for parents, staff and students. The changes are summarised below:

All parents will need to complete one excursion form for all general excursions (i.e. sport, subject based excursions etc.) that must be returned to the General Office by Wednesday June 24. All school council approved activities (i.e. camps and high risk activities) will require a separate permission form. Students will not be able to participate in school excursions without this form being completed fully and signed by their parents.

Parents will be notified of excursions via email (unless families have already requested a hard copy). All excursion notices will be downloadable from the college website in the calendar section.

Excursions requiring payment will still need to be processed at the General Office. This will involve one of the two following payment options

- Printing off a payment slip from the college website in the 'For Parents' section, filling it in and returning the money and slip in an envelope (students will be given blank payment slips to be take home and keep – extras can always be obtained from the General Office too).
- Bpay – We are currently in the processes of implementing Bpay. We anticipate this being ready in the near future. Payments for all excursions, camps, fees etc. will be able to be done through this system.

Teachers will take a print out of medical and emergency contact information from school records on the excursion with them. Therefore it is very important that all medical information at the college is up to date. This is the parent's responsibility to ensure the college has current relevant information. If you would like to update your medical information a medical update form can be downloaded from the college website in the 'For Parents' section. This then needs to be returned to the General Office.

If you have any queries regarding these procedures please contact John Ballagh at school anytime.

Values in Action Schools Project

Three of the schools in the Maroondah Education Coalition, Parkwood Secondary, Ringwood Secondary and Maroondah Secondary, have been successful in applying jointly for funding from the Commonwealth Government for a Values In Action Schools Project (VASP). The basis of our application is to explore the theme of Cultural Identity and Inclusion through activities both inside and outside the classroom. The project is titled: Youth Voice-Fostering Respect, Inclusiveness and Tolerance.

To date we have had two student forums where student leaders from the three schools got together to discuss issues around Community and Cultural Inclusion. Parkwood has chosen to focus on Year 10 students for this project and our Year 10 student leaders have been involved in these forums. These were hugely successful and students from the three schools have had two afternoons getting to know each other while exploring these issues.

Some students have also participated in a student workshop on Emotional Intelligence with a second workshop to follow in July. Some staff will also be participating in a similar workshop for teachers.

A major focus of the work we will be doing across the three schools is the creation and publication of a Youth Voice magazine. At Parkwood, our work will centre on a unit of work in Year 10 on Human Rights and Cultural Identity that will be delivered in the classroom across English and Civics this term and for some of next term. Some of our Year 10 students will also be producing a radio program for SYNfm and part of their program will contain some of the material related to our project.

An exciting aspect of the project is a Cultural Day at Maroondah Secondary College on 18 June. All our Year 10 students have been invited by Maroondah to attend for the day. This promises to be a great community building day with our students interacting with students from the other two schools and hopefully getting to know some of the students who have come from cultures vastly different from our own.

Val Morelli
Curriculum Coordinator.

The big screens in the foyer of the general office and the library are being used to show some of the scenes of life at Parkwood.

One of the first videos we've made available online shows some of the scenes from the first Student Forum.

It can be found on our website at http://www.parkwood.vic.edu.au/text/parkwood_on_show_ae5m.htm
15/06/2009 parkwood.sc@edumail.edu.vic.au page 3

Snippets of English News

Year 12 Bombshells Excursion

On Thursday 21st May, a large group of Year 12 students, accompanied by Mrs Thomas and Mr Benjamin, participated in a very enlightening visit to the Selwyn Theatre at Southbank in the city, to see an MTC performance of the play Bombshells, which is one of their current English texts. The play, which consists of six monologues, about six very different women, was presented by the same actress and she managed to capture their diversity extremely well. The majority of students would probably agree, that viewing a live performance of the play, was a great way to experience a vivid, visual representation of the six female characters and it also allowed them to develop a better appreciation of the main components of the play as a whole. Students need to understand that a play is meant to be viewed, not simply read, thus any opportunity given to them to see a play in action, should be grasped without question. Hopefully, most students now have a much better understanding of the play, especially the various female characters that are its focus. The students can now look forward to seeing the play A Man for All Seasons - another of their texts for 2009 – which is scheduled for early August, next term.

MS Readathon Presentation

All Year 7 and 8 students and some of their teachers, were invited on Thursday 28th May, to listen to a talk given by Keith, a representative of the MS Readathon. The MS Readathon is an annual fund raising competition, run by MS Australia. MS Australia, raises valuable funds to aid in much needed research into the terrible, debilitating disease of Multiple Sclerosis and as Keith revealed, this is a disease that can strike at any age. Multiple sclerosis, as we discovered, is an unpredictable and mysterious disease of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). Our central nervous system contains nerve fibres that help send information to and from different parts of our body. A substance called myelin coats the nerve fibres, like insulation around an electric cable. The healthy body's immune system normally defends the body from attack by viruses or bacteria. However, in the case of MS, the body's immune system attacks its own myelin, causing disruption to messages being sent to and from the brain. The myelin becomes scarred and the damaged areas are called "scleroses". As they appear in many or "multiple" places within the central nervous system, the disease is called Multiple Sclerosis. Some facts about MS:

- MS affects over 18,000 Australians and more than 2,500,000 people around the world, and is most common in young adults.
- It's usually diagnosed between 20 and 40 years of age.
- About three times as many women as men have MS.
- It is more common in cooler climates.
- MS is not contagious.
- Symptoms can be mild or severe and come and go unpredictably.
- It affects each person differently.
- The cause and cure of MS is unknown.

Now in its 30th year, the MS Readathon is Australia's principal literacy and fundraising program and every year it encourages children to improve their reading skills, as well as teaching them the value of giving to others, by supporting Australians living with MS. Last year more than 46,000 Australian kids joined in the fun by reading more than one million books and raising over \$3.5 million. Therefore, once again, we are urging as many of our students as possible to enter the competition and see not only how many books they can read over the month of June (1st to 30th), but how much money they can raise, to help further the research currently being done in relation to Multiple Sclerosis. We would also ask parents to support the students in any way that they can and this is a way to not only do something that many of us find enjoyable, that is the act of reading, but to do it for a very worthy cause as well, so let's get reading!!!

Thank you
Mrs Bev Thomas
Head of English

Senior School News

With two and a half weeks left of term, all VCE students need to focus their energies on Unit 2 and Unit 4 coursework. The temptation to take it easy as the holidays approach is a recipe for disaster. New coursework is being taught as the VCE school year draws to an early close, hence continuing to work hard at this time of the year will ensure sufficient revision time at the end of the year.

On Tuesday 23rd June, all Year 12 students are expected to attend the major Tertiary Information Session at Deakin University Burwood. We will be leaving school at 8.40am and arriving back in time for period 5 and 6 classes. Students have already received permission forms and need to return these promptly with their \$5 subsidised payment.

Year 10 students should already have organised their work experience for the last week of term (22nd -26th

June) but Mrs Miriklis has agreed to accept late forms by this Friday 12th June. Those who don't organise work experience will be expected to be at school for the last week of term.

In closing, students are reminded about the importance of maintaining regular communication with their teachers. Too many students underperforming on Outcomes are not seeking their teachers for re-sits. This is the responsibility of the student. Furthermore, students are reminded that in VCE medical certificates must be presented when an Outcome is missed. Failure to do so may jeopardise your capacity to pass that subject. Please do not wait for your teacher to track you down. Monday night homework sessions are a terrific opportunity to fit in missed work and re-sits. Many VCE teachers give up their time to assist students on a Monday night. We would love to see you there next Monday.

Mrs Harris, M Braknys, Mrs Miriklis

Career News

1. LIKE TO 'ACCESS' MONASH BUT WORRIED ABOUT YOUR ENTER? 'Access Monash' is a program of alternative entry pathways, special admissions schemes, scholarships and bursaries that can help gain entry to a degree. The program helps people of Australian indigenous descent, rural or isolated areas, having socio-economic difficulties, a disability or long-term medical condition, from non-English speaking backgrounds and those with long-term family difficulties. If studying at Monash is limited by financial, geographical, cultural or personal hardship you may qualify for a scholarship, bursary or alternate entry pathway. Info: www.monash.edu/access; applications, later in the year, through VTAC (www.vtac.edu.au). The Diploma of Tertiary Studies (at Gippsland & Berwick) is a one year program alternative for university study. It combines elective units from your chosen discipline with core units on learning, studying and communications skills. It allows you to complete units from your degree of interest including art and design, arts, business, education, IT, nursing and science. On successful completion you can apply for a related Monash course and obtain credits.

2. UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE UPDATE: The University has indicated that the Bachelor of Oral Health is a continuing degree. It is not having its last intake in 2010 (see last Career News).

3. INTERESTED IN NIDA? The National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney (NIDA) is holding an information evening about their full time courses in acting, design, production, production crafts (costume and properties), scenery construction and music theatre. When: 7.15 for 7.30pm to 9pm, Tues 9 June; Where: ACMI Federation Square, Melbourne, Cinema 2; Register: marketing@nida.edu.au or www.nida.edu.au/info-evening. NIDA is also conducting Short Courses on Tour in Melbourne and Ballarat in the school holidays (acting, music theatre, drama, directing, audition, and TV presenting). When: Ballarat 30 June-3 Jul & 4-5 July; Melbourne: 6-10 July & 11-12 July; Where: (Melb) Centrestage, 15 Albert St, Brunswick East; Bookings/info: NIDA ph 02 9697 7626 or open@nida.edu.au; Details/online booking: www.nida.edu.au (see touring pages).

4. INTERESTED IN PHOTOGRAPHY? Photography can be studied at university, TAFE or at independent colleges. For example, RMIT University has a Bachelor of Arts (Photography), Deakin Uni offers photography in their Arts and Media & Communications degrees and Swinburne Uni in the Communication Design degree. RMIT TAFE and NMIT also offer photography courses. Independent colleges such as Photographic Studies College (Southbank), International College of Creative Arts (South Melbourne) and the Photographic Imaging College (Hawthorn) offer diplomas in photography. Check out their websites at www.psc.edu.au, www.icpp.net and www.pic.org.au.

5. LA TROBE UNIVERSITY NEWS (from a recent conference)

- The federal government is providing \$123.7m. to La Trobe and it has received \$97.9m for the La Trobe Institute for Molecular Sciences (LIMS) which will include 200 research positions and \$88.9m for La Trobe Rural Health School at Bendigo.
- La Trobe Uni is top in Victoria for student satisfaction. Students enjoy their experience, feel a sense of belonging and lecturers are friendly and approachable.
- In 2010 the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering is introducing new double degrees: Bachelor of Information Systems/ Master of Health Information Management and a Bachelor of Science/ Master of Nanotechnology.
- \$230m Biosciences Research Centre: due for completion 2011; honours/ postgraduate students will be able to train in one of the world's best biosciences facilities.
- The Faculty of Health Sciences is offering a new course in 2010: Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Paramedic Practice at Bendigo; Albury-Wodonga, Mildura and Shepparton campuses will also offer the first year of this course, with students completing the final three years at Bendigo. The B. Health Sciences/ Master of Podiatric Practice and the B. Health Sciences/ Master of Speech Pathology will be offered at Bendigo campus in 2010. Several other Health Science courses will be offered at Albury-Wodonga, Mildura and Shepparton.
- French will be offered as a major at beginner and advanced levels in 2010.

6. SOME COURSES AT LA TROBE UNIVERSITY:

- Why complete an ARTS DEGREE? Arts degrees provide students with broad options in the humanities area, allowing them to follow their own interest while working out what they really want to do; Arts teaches transferable skills (critical thinking, evaluation, interpreting, research, time management, teamwork, verbal and written). Possible careers: teaching, management & administration, communication industry, publishing, media, public relations, tourism, public service and social welfare, promotions, liaison, human resources. Careers depend on subjects studied eg cinema studies major: film & TV production, film and media policy, film and sound archives, media analysis, writing/publishing; language major: translating/interpret-ing, government, hospitality & tourism, community-based organisation and international business.
- What is ORTHOPTICS? Orthoptists specialise in disorders of vision and eye movements. They investigate and monitor eye disease, diagnose and provide non-surgical treatment of neurological eye problems and provide vision rehabilitation. They investigate and treat eye disease, screen for glaucoma, photography and imaging of the eye, visual field testing, work in refractive laser clinics, prescribe glasses for a range of treatment needs, provide rehabilitation for patients with low vision so they can remain independent. Orthoptists qualifying at La Trobe can register to work in Australia and are recognised around the world. Currently there is a shortage of orthoptists in Australia.
- What is HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT? It underpins the healthcare system. Eg: manage medical records and health information (hospitals, private GP/specialist practices), coded diagnoses and operations (for casemix-based funding for hospitals), coded and analysed clinical and demographic information (population health, state/national policy, funding/planning health services), patient clinical information (for research). HIM's analyse/interpret health information. Suits those wanting to work in healthcare, be at the edge in health developments (eg electronic health records), are inquisitive, enjoy management and want very good options for career development and jobs. There is a massive shortage of HIM's across Australia

REMINDERS>>>>>COMING SOON

- 'At Monash' Seminars to go: Nursing/midwifery/ paramedics, Design, Medicine/biomedical science/nutrition/ dietetics, Fine Art, Multimedia & digital art. Book/info: Ph 9903 4758 or Valerie. foster@adm.monash.edu.au www.monash.edu.au/study/events.
- 'Focus on Melbourne' to go: Arts, Music, Visual/Performing Arts, Science, Biomedicine, Environments; www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/focusonmelbourne.
- Year 10's and Deakin: 11 June; www.deakin.edu.au/year10
- Medical Lab visits: 6 - 10 July; www.rmit.edu.au/medical-sciences/lab-visits
- Engineering at RMIT: 30 June, 1 July, 9 July; www.rmit.edu.au/sece/experience; www.rmit.edu.au/aero-mech.
- Folio help: www.shortcourses.rmit.edu.au; www.latrobe.edu.au/visualarts/folioworkshop
- Circus Arts sessions: 29 June - 3 July; www.nica.com.au
- 'Experience La Trobe': term holidays www.latrobe.edu.au/experience

Term 2 Activities

Coalition Unit 3 Exam Revision Classes

On Sunday May 31st at Norwood SC, VCE exam revision classes were held for coalition students in Chemistry, Physics and Biology. A Psychology session was previously offered from 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm on May 27th at Ringwood SC. Student feedback regarding the revision sessions was very positive:

Overall:

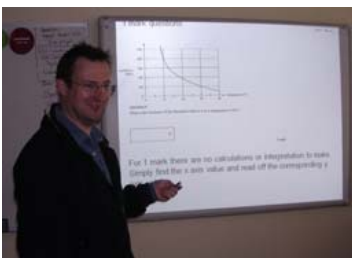
- ❖ 82% of students stated they had learned something new in their revision sessions
- ❖ 88% of students stated that they now had more understanding of the subject matter
- ❖ 88% of students stated that they now felt more confident to tackle further revision and exam practice
- ❖ 87% of students stated that they were happy to give up their weekend/afterschool time to attend the sessions
- ❖ 91% of students stated that they would recommend the revision program to other students

A sample of student comments:

- ❖ *Really well set out with good slideshows. Well explained and easy to understand*
- ❖ *Allowed me to refresh my memory about certain terms and get a true idea of what to study*
- ❖ *Just as effective as a lecture session I paid for at Melbourne Uni. Thanks.*
- ❖ *The use of past exam questions was helpful in understanding what the examiners are looking for and what to expect in the exam.*

Thank you to the following coalition teachers for preparing and delivering the revision sessions.

- Darryl Stranger, Andrew Hansen and Jessica Lambden from Ringwood SC
- Tony Lahy and Rachael Barker from Norwood SC
- Geoff Brasier and Julie McDonald from Heathmont College



Values in Action Schools Project (VASP)

This year the MEC is implementing a project on Values Education. Maroondah SC, Parkwood SC and Ringwood SC members, local community group representatives and VASP project advisors will participate in joint events during the year.

Our project is titled: *Youth Voice-Fostering Respect, Inclusiveness and Tolerance*

Our third event this semester, a student workshop on Emotional Intelligence (EI), was held on May 19th at Parkwood SC. The presenter, Dr Karen Hansen from the Brain Science Institute Swinburne University, explored the concept of Emotional Intelligence with students and its importance to building positive relationships with others through self awareness of our own emotions.

At the end of the session, students indicated that they now had a much greater understanding of what EI is, and its relevance to our MEC Values Project.

Some student comments included:

- ❖ *The skills learnt about EI will help us have a better understanding of our values*
- ❖ *Understanding your own emotions allows you to create effective relationships*
- ❖ *Need to be aware of our own and others' feelings to be part of a community*
- ❖ *It will help me understand some of my refugee students better, along with new students*
- ❖ *People with higher EIs are better at socialising to provide a friendlier community*
- ❖ *Learning EI fits in with our project because it helps us to communicate with others*



Lyn McGoldrick - MEC Lead learner

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