February, 2015

To all students and parents

I would like to welcome everyone to the 2015 academic year. In particular I would like to warmly welcome our new Year 7 students, as well as all new students to Years 8, 9 and 10. As we commence the year I would like to draw your attention to a number of key areas.

Staff

It is my pleasure to introduce a number of new staff to MacKillop in 2015. Joining us this year are:

Mrs Tricia Scott – Resource Centre (Library)
Mr Jason Clifford (Term 1 – Construction and MDT)
Mr Chris Nettlefold-Roberts (Term 1 – HPE)
Mr Andrew Banks (Utility Officer)
Miss Laura Robinson (Outdoor Recreation Trainee)

Mr Graham Absolom and Mr Tim Johns will be taking Long Service Leave during Term 1 this year.

I welcome back to the College the following staff members from their respective leaves during last year: Miss Andrea Scott, Mr Justin O’Brien, Mrs Nina Dobie and Mrs Alice Smith.

The Year Level Coordinators for 2015 are detailed below:

Year 7 – Mrs Olivia Stephen
Year 8 – Mr Mat Dixon
Year 9 – Mr Phillip Stanley
Year 10 – Mr Ben Slade

If students or parents have any concerns their first contact should be made with the Home Room teacher. Home Room teachers will soon introduce themselves to you in their own letter of introduction.

Parent-Student-Teacher Goal Setting Conference

In 2014 we introduced a new goal setting initiative for students. As goal setting has increasingly become an important strategy to help people work towards their own objectives we provide an opportunity for teachers to work with both students and parents to identify academic, social and organisational goals for the year. This initially involves the completion of a form in which the child, working with their parents/caregivers, to identify a few key areas or goals they would like to achieve during 2015.

In March parents/caregivers and student will need to attend a conference meeting with their Home Room teacher, or support teacher, to discuss the identified goals. These meetings would be about 15 minutes in duration. To facilitate these conferences a Student Free Day has been scheduled for Friday, 27 February. Additionally, teachers will also be available on Thursday, 26 February from 4-6pm.

Further information about this new initiative will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. Please put the above dates in your diary.

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Capital Works
The building work that commenced in 2013 is almost complete. As you are well aware this has been a major project for the College and includes new learning and teaching spaces for Years 8, 9 and 10, new Drama and Music Rooms, Learning Support Rooms, Uniform Shop, Counsellor Office and a new Resource Centre (Library). The old demountable classrooms, known as Kirby Block, have also been demolished and removed.

21st Celebrations - Celebrating 21 Years of inspiring learning
This year marks the College’s 21st year of operation. The College opened in 1994, with an enrolment of 59 students. Today, we marked this major milestone in the College’s life with a tree planting ceremony, a re-enactment of the tree planting ceremony which took place on the first day of operation in 1994.

There will be a number of events throughout 2015 to celebrate the College’s 21st anniversary. Events, such as a cocktail party and a dinner in August will be highlights of the College’s calendar this year.

Planners
Planners are an effective communication and organisational tool used by parents, teachers and students. There are some important expectations about the use of planners. I particularly emphasise that:

- the planner is used by students, teachers and parents – it is not the sole property of the student;
- all homework is to be written into the planner and it is to be signed weekly by both parent and Home Room teacher;
- only school information is to be included;
- the cover is to be kept clean;
- you must have your planner with you at each lesson;
- damaged, graffitied, defaced or poorly maintained planners must be replaced.

If your planner does not meet those conditions, it will be replaced by your Home Room teacher and you will need to pay the cost of its replacement.

Newsletter
The newsletter is written and distributed to students each fortnight. The newsletter contains a lot of information that is relevant to both parents and students. A copy of the newsletter is placed on our College website. I encourage you to read each issue for important news and information.

I wish you all the best for a happy and successful year.

Dr Sally Towns
Principal