29 April 2013

PRINCIPALS REPORT

Welcome back to Term 2. I have been thrilled to see so many parents taking the opportunity to meet with their children’s teachers over the last few weeks of school. This interest in the progress of your children this year will lead to a better understanding of what is required for each student to improve their performance at school. Please keep in touch via email with the relevant teachers to monitor progress of your child throughout this term. It is always our intention to build a strong relationship with parents and staff so that every opportunity is taken to support each child in their learning endeavours.

Throughout this term, Varsity College will continue to explore a number of issues surrounding the future of this school. These include;

1. Application to become an Independent Public School
2. Development of additional facilities to combat the increased student numbers enrolled at this school
3. The sustainable future of the 1:1 program

Each of these issues has been discussed openly for the last 1-2 years and the administration has provided consultation opportunities for parents and community members on numerous occasions and at P&C meetings. I am very concerned that some community members have been espousing opinions that are not based on any factual information, instead just uninformed opinion. This is very concerning and undermines the effective consultation process that is taking place. I would ask that all parents and community members’ who are seeking to know more about these proposals, make the effort to come to the next P&C meeting on 15 May to hear about the Varsity College action plan for each of these issues. The administration has developed a comprehensive plan for addressing these issues and this plan will be fully outlined at this meeting.

I would stress that until this point in time, please refrain from making opinionated comments that are clearly not factual. This is damaging beyond all measure and not productive for the Varsity College community trying to make an informed, value adding decision that will support the attainment of improved student learning outcomes.

This term we will be holding our first College Winter Fair on Saturday 1 June. There will be many opportunities for parents and students to be involved in this event and I would ask all members of our community to consider how they can be involved in this experience. While the P&C is hopeful of generating some much needed funds to support our student learning, we are all hoping that this will be a day remembered for the community spirit that is engendered. We would ask that everyone keep this day free so that the whole Varsity College community can get behind this and make it a very special event.

There will be many other events that will be happening at Varsity College this term and I would encourage all members of the College community to come along and support our students as they participate in sporting events, musical presentations and other events. These all add to the experience of being a Varsity student and parent participation, is a great way to ensure the memories that these events produce, remain for many years to come.

Jeff Davis
Executive Principal

PREPARATORY TO YEAR 3 NEWS

From the Principal

I welcome you all back to what will be another great term at Varsity Prep School. We are delighted to have in our classrooms over 200 Lenovo Tablets that have been set up for learning during the holidays. We are currently working with the classroom teachers in developing a broad suite of applications that the students will use on a daily basis to support their learning across the key learning areas, especially in Maths and English. Over the course of the year, we will be providing opportunities for parents to come along to sessions to learn more about Windows 8 and the potential for enhancing learning that these devices provide. More information will be provided over the coming weeks.

Staffing Changes

We have had to make some staffing changes due to the unexpected departure of Allyson Hodgson HOC of Prep & Yr 1, who has moved her family to Canberra to take up a school leadership position. Mrs Hodgson is originally from the capital, so I wish her well in her endeavours south of the border. We have selected as her replacement Mrs Kylie Dansey, who is a long term staff member at Varsity College and has worked extensively in Prep and Year 1 during her time here. Kylie will be working 2 days a week as HOC while Mrs Stephanie Devine will be taking up the role as classroom teacher on Tuesday & Wednesdays. Mrs Devine comes to us with many years’ experience in Prep and I am sure she will continue to produce high quality learning opportunities for the children in Prep Yellow.
Parent Partnership Meetings

I would like to acknowledge the large number of parents who have taken the opportunity to meet with their classroom teacher over the past fortnight. These partnership meetings are vital to provide you with 2 key out comes: To be informed and to be involved in your child’s learning.

ANZAC Day Ceremony

I was privileged to witness both the senior and junior campus ANZAC Ceremonies this week and I was so proud to see how our children responded with such respect and pride throughout. I was particularly impressed by our 2 Year 3 students who spoke in front of 1500 senior school students at the official college ceremony. What was special for these students is that they were given the opportunity to talk to our special guests, which included military personnel and representatives from Legacy, RSL and various other organisations. Our choirs and band were amazing with their renditions of inspirational songs to really set the mood for the entire ceremony. I always look forward to the ANZAC Day celebrations at our school and this year was no exception.

After School Care Move

Many of you who are part of the program will now realise that the After School Care program has moved to the Hall and we are delighted with how smooth the transition has been. Thanks to the director, Briony, and her team for being so accommodating during the change process. We look forward to a long and productive relationship with Camp Australia in their new home.

Farewell for Now

“It is with mixed feelings I announce my moving on from Varsity college for a short period, taking on the acting Principal role at Mount Cotton State School in the Redland Bay district until the end of this semester. It feels like the last 4 years have gone by very quickly since the time I arrived at Varsity College and, as they say, time flies when you are having fun. I have thoroughly enjoyed leading this sub-school and feel that I can leave at this time confident with the school’s direction as we move into a new and exciting chapter of learning with the introduction of mobile learning devices – the Lenovo Think-Pad Tablets.

I look forward to this opportunity as acting Principal as it will allow me to develop further as a school leader. I will really miss the children in our sub-school – they are wonderful, friendly and happy students who make coming to school every day a pleasure. To the parents who have supported me and believed in my vision for the Early Learning Years, thank you. I would lastly like to thank the amazing staff at Varsity for their hard work and dedication during my time here – they are an inspiration and I have learnt so much from every-one of them. I am certain they will continue to be the reason why our school is such a great place for children to learn and grow.”

James Forrest
Director of the Preparatory School
Varsity College

JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWS

Junior School

Welcome back to Term 2 and I certainly hope everyone had a fabulous Easter break!

The Anzac Ceremony held at the Senior School last Wednesday was a very memorable and moving occasion, and one I’m sure our Junior School leaders will long remember. Jai and Mia (School Captains) delivered a short but poignant reflection on behalf of the Junior students and had the opportunity to talk to other invited guests at the morning tea which followed.

P-6 students also held a wonderful assembly with Year 6 students having the opportunity to have discussions with veterans and reflect on their experiences.

It was disappointing that our first Friday of Interschool Sport was cancelled due to Council grounds being deemed “unplayable”; however we took the opportunity to train. It is important for all students to ensure they have the necessary equipment to participate each Friday, and that they are organised for their sport.

We are excited about preparations underway for the Fete which will be held on Saturday, 1 June, and we look forward to seeing everyone there to take part in the events – it will be a fantastic fundraiser for the College and an event involving a great deal of organisation – your support will make it a success!

NAPLAN

NAPLAN is the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy which is held on an annual basis nationally for all students in Years 3 and 5.

The testing encompasses Language Conventions which includes spelling, grammar and punctuation; Reading and Numeracy to include number, space, algebra, function and pattern, measurement, chance and data.

NAPLAN is designed to assess literacy and numeracy skills students already possess through the school curriculum, and whilst teachers ensure students are familiar with the test format, the best way you can assist is to reassure your child that NAPLAN tests are just one part of their school program and urge them to do the best they can.

A NAPLAN report will go home later in the year detailing your child’s performance.

NAPLAN testing for Years 3 and 5 is scheduled in Week 5 of this term as follows:

- Tuesday 14 May  Language Conventions and Writing
- Wednesday 15 May  Reading
- Thursday 16 May  Numeracy

Further information can be obtained from the following website:
Parent Interviews

It is hoped that all parents were able to meet with their child’s teacher over the past two weeks to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss your child’s progress and to set short and long term goals for individual achievement.

These interviews are part of the College reporting progress leading up to Semester 1 Reports which will go home at the end of this term.

Follow us on Twitter: https://twitter.com/VarsityPrimary
The Twitter feed is also now available on the College Website.

ACROSS CAMPUS NEWS

Class Stalls

As you are aware, this year we will be holding the ‘Varsity College Winter Fair’ on Saturday 1st June.

Year levels and faculties have selected stalls to run and are now asking parents/caregivers to assist with supplies, donations and help.

To make the fair a great success we are requesting any of the items listed below:

- Trash and treasure items
- Potted Plants for Plant Stall
- 1.5 – 2L Bottles of soft drink for Spider Drink Stall
- Books and DVDs for 2nd hand bookstore
- Raffle donations for Cent Sale / Major Raffle
- Toys for a used Toy Stall
- Unopened packets of flour / sugar for cake and fairy floss stalls
- Packets of drinking straws
- Snack foods such as cans of soft drink, chocolate bars & small packets of potato chips for Snack Stall
- Packets of paper plates and serviettes
- Photograph printing paper
- Second hand glamorous frocks / designer after 5 clothes

These items will be greatly received at the Middle School Office or the Junior School Parent Hub from Wednesday April 24 – Friday May 24 during the hours 8am – 8.30am.

Ride Tickets Sales

Ride Tickets are on sale for the Varsity College Winter Fair on June 1.

Tickets can be purchased by going to www.fete.varsitycollege.com.au , click on “tickets” and follow the instructions. Wrist bands can be collected from school on Friday 31 May and Saturday 1 June.

Gold Sponsor

Silver Sponsors

Network Educational Australia

Our local stationery, text, books and teacher resources supplier for our Back to School requirements. We thank them for their ongoing support and service to Varsity College.


Scene Interior Art

Graphic Design Service including... logo design, business cards, letterheads, flyers, brochures etc.

Call Nicki for a free quote...
Mobile: 0405 469 776
Email: nicki@sceneart.com.au

U Can Store It

Patsy Tierney
Phone: 5593 8355
Email: patsy@ucanstoreit.com.au

Gold Coast Orthodontists - Dr Joseph Bleakley - Dr Angie Phelan - Dr Scott McNab
www.gcsmiles.com.au

YMCA Family Day Care

Optimal Health Chiropractic

Prize Donation Sponsors

PCYC
Dreamy Kids
McDonalds Restaurants – Mermaid Beach
Hair by Nat
Advanced Life Photography
Place Realty
Karen Andrew MP – Federal Member for McPherson
Steve Halligan – Halligan Fitness
Uniform Shop News

Opening Hours

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<tr>
<th>Prep/Junior Uniform Shop</th>
<th>Ph: 5576 9308</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>8:00am to 10:00am</td>
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<td>2:00pm to 3:30pm</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<th>Middle/Senior Uniform Shop</th>
<th>Ph: 5562 3512</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
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Winter Uniform

Winter uniform should be varsity jumper/jackets/trackpants only.
Plain navy or any other colours are not acceptable.
Items are available now at both shops.
Fleece Jumper - Prep to Yr 12
Size 4 – 14 $36.00
Size 16 – 24 $ 39.00
Jacket – Prep to Yr 12
All sizes $49.00
Trackpants Prep to Yr 12
All sizes $ 36.00
Knit Jumper – Yr 7 – Yr 12 only
Size 12 – 22 $ 59.00
School Blazers
These are now available for Senior years only
Size 12 - 20 $ 110.00
2nd Hand Uniform changes
Please note that we are no longer able to accept shorts and skirts for second hand without the Varsity tick logo or the older style check blouses and white blouses as these have now been lengthened.

$12 Sport Shorts!!
We still have a few old stock sports shorts available for $12.
The sizes are
Boys 4 and 6
Girls 4 and 6
Unfortunately they are non-returnable.

Telephone Credit Card purchases of Uniform
It is possible to purchase uniform items over the phone which can be collected from the uniform shops or the school office. Purchases can be made by contacting the uniform shop during the opening hours or by leaving a message out of hours. During busy times when we cannot get to the telephone a message can be left and we will contact you as soon as possible.
Junior School – 5576 9308
Senior School – 5562 3512

SECONDARY CAMPUS NEWS

From the Campus Director

I am extremely proud to be able to communicate the incredible start we have had to Term 2 in the Secondary campus. I would like to once again thank the school community for your support of the College uniform policy and the ongoing support and commitment to our College values and school rules. It is amazing to hear the ongoing feedback that we receive from visitors to the school commenting on the excellent level of student engagement in classrooms, the quality of teaching, and the effectiveness of the school environment including the laptop program. This outcome is only achieved through the collective commitment by all community members and through our ongoing commitment to maintaining the high standards that are expected of our school.

On Tuesday May 14, Wednesday May 15 and Thursday May 16 this year, all Year 7 and Year 9 students will be required to complete the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The tests will assess students on writing, reading, language conventions (incl. punctuation, grammar and spelling) and numeracy. For further information, parents should speak to their child’s Foundation teacher and / or view the NAPLAN website: www.naplan.edu.au.

The annual Secondary Campus Cross Country event will be held on Friday, May 3. All students are encouraged to participate in the event to be held at Pizzey Park. Students in Years 8 to 12 are encouraged to wear appropriate clothing in the colour of their sports house. Year 7 students will need to wear their sports uniform as Interschool Sport follows the cross country program.

Term 2 Staffing changes:
- Kath Sirret : Acting Head of Department Social Sciences
- Linda Martin : Foundation Teacher Year 7
- Matt Miller : Foundation Teacher Year 8
- Sydney Heylen : Foundation Teacher Year 9
- Matt Smith : Foundation Teacher Year 9 and HPE

Prize Donation Sponsors

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Evie” Inflatable Rashies</th>
<th>Ambarella Fine Foods, Burleigh Homespace</th>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Corner Newsagency</td>
<td>Cold Rock, Christine Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBD Hotel, Varsity Lakes</td>
<td>Dan Murphys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diamonds Tavern, Christine Avenue</td>
<td>Massage One, Varsity Lakes Shopping Centre</td>
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<td>Stages Physiotherapy, Christine Corner</td>
<td>Varsity Lakes Tavern</td>
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Prizes

- “Evie” Inflatable Rashies
- Polo T-Shirts
- Gift Vouchers
David Hilton : Senior Social Science
Flora Chen : Chinese

It is extremely disappointing for all students, staff and parents when interschool or cluster sport is cancelled due to wet weather. The decision to cancel sport is made by the Regional Sport Committee, and is made after consultation with school representatives and grounds staff of the various venues. All efforts are made by this Committee to run sport on the designated day, however, the safety of all students must be made the priority when making decisions. Whilst disappointing, we ask that parents do not take frustrations out on school staff who are not involved in making the decision to cancel sport.

Upcoming Events

- Senior School Parent / Teacher Interview evenings: Tuesday, April 23 and Wednesday, April 24
- Secondary Campus Cross Country: Friday, May 3
- Moving Opera Performance: Friday, May 3
- Year 7 and 9 NAPLAN: May 14 - 17
- Varsity College Annual Leadership Dinner: Thursday, May 23
- Varsity College Winter Fair: Saturday, June 1

Uniform Reminders:

- For cooler days, students are permitted to wear the Varsity College jumper or the Varsity College jacket, as per the uniform policy. Year 12 students will be allowed to wear their Senior jersey on a Wednesday and Friday only.
- From the beginning of Term 3, all students will be required to wear the sports uniform shoes as per the updated uniform policy. The shoes must be a base white (predominately white colour) or the black leather lace-up shoes with the sports sole.

Stephen O’Brien
Director of Secondary Campus

Operation Farm Save/Blaze Aid in the wake of the 2013 Australia Day Floods

In the early hours of the morning on Australia day 2013, Bundaberg was ordered to evacuate the northern suburbs immediately. A flood peak of 9.8 metres was heading their way and was in excess of the predicted levels.

The authorities in Bundaberg knew this wall of destruction was heading their way and how high it was because it had already carved a swathe of destruction through the towns and farms of the Burnett Valley. At its height the flood waters reached an unprecedented 23 metres at the bridge over the Burnett River at a town called Munduberra.

When the immediate danger was over a volunteer group called Blaze Aid came in the help the town’s people and farmers with the reconstruction of their properties through operation Farm Save. On my first visit as a volunteer I was introduced to the scale of work that needed to be done. The people of Munduberra needed a workforce to get them back on their feet. I knew that Varsity College had a workforce that could be approached.

After much organisation by Mr Arnett and myself, a bus load of our own Varsity College students enrolled in the Certificate 1 Construction course headed to Munduberra to give them some of the support they needed. The boys were told what to expect but would not appreciate the task until they experienced it first-hand. The jobs they were given included, assembling pig feeders, light demolition of internal walls in inundated houses, re-sheeting those walls, repairing irrigation lines, digging to locate pumping pipes, repairing fencing, rebuilding new fencing and clearing the build-up of debris on fence wire. Once again students from our college displayed qualities we have come to expect from our students. They should be congratulated on their work ethic, their willingness to help, their eagerness to perform tasks that were not that inviting, being prepared to get their hands very dirty and all the while showing courtesy to the adults around them.

They also had an opportunity to meet and talk to the local framers and townspeople about their experiences of that night. Some stories were amusing but others gave the harsh realities of a natural disaster. These locals were very appreciative of the visit by the boys and their work ethic. Some could not believe that boys from a school on the Gold Coast would come so far to help them. The boys also gained a very valuable life lesson in the process.

I would also like to mention the invaluable support that Construction Skills Queensland gave to the project through the sponsorship of transport to and from Munduberra. Without this support the project could not have gone ahead.

Mr John Philistin

Musical – Grease is the word!

Our Grease Musical rehearsals are in full swing. Friday afternoons have never been more exciting on the Varsity College Senior Campus. Musicians are rehearsing in one space, intense dancing rehearsals in the dance room, with both lead characters and chorus blocking scenes and learning songs in the auditorium. It is a hive of creative activity and it is fantastic.

Please keep the following dates free, so you can watch our production at the Arts Centre Gold Coast:

- Saturday Evening 29th June
- Sunday Matinee 30th June

Tickets will be sold through the Senior Campus Payment office and will be available from mid-term 2.

- Child $5
- Adult $10
I must say, this is a very inexpensive theatre trip to the Arts Centre Gold Coast, so start saving your pennies and start spreading the news to family and friends. Tickets are by allocated seating, so first in best dressed. What am I saying? It’s the Art Centre; every seat is the best seat!

“If you can’t be an athlete, be an athletic supporter” ~Principal McGee Grease

Or, as I like to put it…

If you can’t in the musical, be a musical supporter ♫♫

Moving Opera

Opera Queensland has an in-school program for Secondary Schools called Moving Opera and Varsity College was the first school on the Gold Coast to offer this one week workshop to our students. Approximately thirty students participate in 25 hours of training delivered by Opera Queensland’s professional singers. They work on current repertoire from the Company’s Opera season, as well as selected Musical Theatre pieces. It is an intense week of performance training and concludes with a culminating concert.

We have held this event over the last two years and the response from the audience is always incredible. In order for you to see the amazing development of student voices with one week’s Opera training, we would like to extend you an invitation to attend our culminating concert. Not only will you be able to see and hear some amazing performers, including Opera Queensland’s own cast, but you will gain an insight into some of the activities the Moving Opera program uses to develop student’s performance skills.

Our culminating concert will be held at the Varsity College Auditorium on Friday 3rd May at 6pm. The concert is only 45 minutes with a light supper provided by Varsity College P&C. Entry is by donation and there is also a raffle with prizes from Opera Queensland and Opera Australia.

“We don’t have time for rubbish.” ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

Michelle Murtagh
Dean of Creative Arts & Musical Producer

Year 7 Write On to Writing

Many of our keen writers in Year 7 have been given the opportunity to develop their creative writing skills and imagination. They are also experiencing online learning, web conferencing and exploring pathways with University Representatives. This online course offers the development of creative writing knowledge within the writing process from planning through to publishing.

“I really enjoy interacting with students from other classes on the web conferences” Nick Yr7

“I enjoy coming up with new ideas for my writing” Chelsea Yr7

Free treatment for children (aged 8 to 12 years) who WORRY a lot.

Griffith University

Parents, is your child a worrier or a “worry wart”? Does your child worry a lot about everything like school, family, friends, their health and saying the wrong thing?

At Griffith University we are offering a free treatment program for children aged 8 to 12 years who worry a lot. Interested?

Contact Dr. Lara Farrell (07) 5552 8317or Monique Holmes (07) 3735 3305;
Email: noworriesprogram@griffith.edu.au ;
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/NoWorriesProgram

COMING EVENTS

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<td>Cross Country Carnival</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prep - 12</td>
<td>Friday 3 May 2013</td>
<td>An Evening of Opera and Musical Theatre</td>
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<td>Monday 6 to Thursday 9 May</td>
<td>P&amp;C Mother’s Day Stall</td>
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<td>P&amp;C Annual Mother’s Day Morning Tea</td>
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<td>Years 3,5,7,9</td>
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