Year 12 Leavers Dinner

Updated on our Website this fortnight:
Principals Report

So What is your “What?” That drives you as a person, what inspires and motivates you every day?
I asked this question at one of our end of term assemblies earlier on this year.
My "what" was then, and still is the belief that education is the most important factor in providing choice for later life and I see this as the underpinning philosophy to providing students with a great place to learn, teachers with a great place to teach and parents with confidence that their children are getting a great education.
We started the year with a number of new staff: Emily Leon in English, Rebecca Nixon in Art, James Kiely in Maths, our new Head Teacher Science Dennis Brown and myself as Principal. This was the first time in many years that Coomealla HS has had such an influx of new staff.
I was also very proud to present 2 of our staff with 30 years teaching awards: Bonny Ward and Dennis Brown. I was fortunate enough to also receive my 30 years teaching award.
At the beginning of the year I spent some time with staff and students a talking to them about my expectations for this year. Respect for yourself, the people around you and the environment was a common theme as was developing a strong work ethic and always trying to do your best and these expectations have underpinned all that we have done this year.
So what have we achieved this year?
The front of school upgrade is proceeding with quotes being received for a car park upgrade. Tidying and remodelling of the front gardens was achieved through the combined efforts of some of our SASS staff and myself planting a rose border outside the office area creating a beautiful aroma as you walk past. We are indebted to BMEET and the L2L program, along with a number of our boys whose hard work has resulted in the development of an Indigenous garden adjacent to the basketball courts. This term we have had our L2L and construction boys along with the professionals creating a path to join the two areas together. Painting of some sections with art work that showcases our vine, paddleboat and Indigenous history will need to wait until it is cooler!
We are in the process of upgrading our technology, in particular the infrastructure needed to ensure that we have a fast, efficient service for students and staff alike. The cost of this will be in the realm of $50,000 as there will be some contribution from DEC.
This term alone we have ordered 1new Smartboard, 6 Touch screen TVs, 2 interactive projectors and 31 computers. Further, all staff computers will have new, larger monitors early in 2015.
We have also purchased a new Rostrum using funds raised by year 12, 2013 and the P&C joined with us in purchasing our huge screen for the hall. We have also ordered just under 500 new textbooks across a number of stages and KLA’s. For 2015 we will have a slightly different system in some areas where parents may purchase a copy of the textbook themselves; more information will be coming out in 2015.
I have also arranged for some internal refurbishment which should be completed in the next holidays including staff and student toilets, the old green lino and some of the old carpet being replaced and the basketball courts being repainted. Covering of the cables and a few new down pipes should complete the initial list.
The P&C ably assisted by staff have been investigating some options for changes to the school uniform. A survey regarding uniform was emailed to parents and staff and we had a huge response; students were surveyed at school in the library. My thanks to Ms Watson for assisting the P&C with this and to the numerous students who I accosted in the corridor and who willingly tried on numerous samples. We will be ready to show samples of design and colour options during term 1. The changeover will be over a 3 year period.

We consolidated our connections with our partner Primary Schools with a view to introducing and extending on some joint activities for both staff and students. For 2015 this will include a Staff Development Day engagement and attendance programs, girls programs and Indigenous activities.

This year I have been to Sydney as part of a reference group to revise the guidelines for the Links to Learning Program. This program is an engagement program for students who are disengaged with school and has been running for over 15 years. It involves students participating in specific activities designed to re engage them in education. I am proud to acknowledge that one of my contributions was to successfully lobby for the inclusion of year 6 students from 2015 onwards.

Our L2L pilot program ended successfully and we were most grateful for the $60,000 grant to enable this worthwhile program to run. Activities included NRL coaching and Primary gala day, makeup and hairdressing, Art (you may have seen our first complete mural on the wall adjacent to the office), BMEET and CHAC activities, 2 camps and TAFE barista courses to name a few. At the time of writing we did not know whether our recent submission for the next grant was successful, but we have now been advised that we have been prioritised for funding but are still awaiting confirmation of the amount.

Indigenous activities were once again a highlight of the year. I am grateful to Amanda, Ron and of course the wonderful Ms Della for all their work in organising these opportunities. We were very lucky to secure the services of a new staff member Will Ward. Will has spent the last 15 years as AEO at Walgett High School and started at Coomealla HS earlier this year as an engagement/support person for Indigenous students 2 days per week and also as our new ACLO 2 days per week. All of these staff have positions for next year and we have already been discussing some new opportunities for our Aboriginal students.

Mungo Youth Project was held again this year at Top Hut Station very closely situated near ancient Lake Mungo and the Walls of China. Staff members Phil Gee and Della Philp took 10 students who did an amazing job presenting their two topics “Changing Mungo Landscape Over Time” and “Initiation Now and Then”, MYP is all about kids teaching kids and our students did an amazing job. Coomealla students were able to have access to AIME Mentors, Elders, Discovery Rangers. Camping out under the stars and playing in the sand hills truly made the experience worthwhile. Our NAIDOC celebrations were fantastic and a number of our staff and students also participated in these celebrations in our partner Primary Schools. Girls and boys camps were also successful and enjoyed by all.

Our NAPLAN results showed an improvement with more students achieving the higher bands and consequently less in the lower band in many areas. Of particular note a greater number of students in year 9 attempted the tests reflecting our increasing attendance patterns throughout 2014. The areas of Grammar, Numeracy and Number results were very pleasing with significant improvement shown.

Our improved results also reflect the considerable work completed through the ILLNP numeracy program that we have been involved in for the last 2 years under the guidance of Mrs Frost.

The Lexia Reading Trial undertaken in Term 3 with 130 students was completed. The program was received positively by the students in the trial and its success has meant that the school has now purchased the Lexia Program for ongoing use by all students. Lexia Reading Core 5 is a computer based program which provides students immediate corrective feedback, multiple levels of scaffolding, and explicit instruction both online and through direct instruction with the teacher. Students work independently to develop reading skills in a structured, sequential manner with a focus on:
• Foundational skills to develop automaticity and fluency
• Listening and reading comprehension with complex text
• Academic and domain-specific vocabulary to improve comprehension

We have invited our partner Primary Schools to be involved in this program also.

Next year sees numerous changes in the way we approach school planning. At present staff, parents and students are continuing to develop a new vision and strategic directions for our school. Maryanne Bohr from our Broken Hill office has been assisting in the facilitation of this during the last two terms. This plan will be finalised during term1, 2015

The school play was a highlight this year and was a fantastic couple of nights showcasing the talents of many of our students.

PBL has had some minor revamping this year with more regular rewards being offered with chocolate baskets and i-tune vouchers being particularly popular. As well as this we have been boosting our PBL focus each week by reintroducing a draw for " good school uniform". My thanks to the sponsors of this program, including the P&C and SRC.

In sport members of the U/14 Wentworth District Junior Football team were presented with the ‘Junior Sports Team Award’ at the Wentworth Shire Australia Day Awards Presentation and at the Mallee Sports Star Awards Coomealla students were once more well represented. Of particular note were the Sunraysia Lakers Basketball team consisting of Tyreece Kelly, Tyler Tyers, Liam Lawson and Tarryn Shaddock who were the junior team of the year. Tyreece Kelly also won the Indigenous Sports Star of the Year award. On a lighter note; congratulations to all students and staff on the recent swimming carnival.

Under the wonderful direction of Duncan Driscoll the Swimming Carnival, despite being the case " four seasons in one day " was an excellent day where students all gave of their very best and there was a high rate of participation.

The Cross Country was held and our best runners as always, excelled going on to compete at the inter-school where Mikayla Fraser came first and Ashton Tilley second in their age groups. At of course our team won the West-Darling competition!

The Athletics Carnival was held on a 2 glorious days and was a very well organised event. An excellent result in the triple jump was achieved by Ashton Tilley who broke the previous record.

I had the pleasure of watching the girls AFL matches during the first of our Winter sports. The support by students, parents and staff was fantastic and showcased Coomealla High School once again as a school that truly "cares about it's kids " . As an avid parent supporter of numerous sporting codes and events I wondered how I would be as a “Principal supporter”. I can safely say that there is no difference! I cheered with everyone else when successful moves happened and groaned when our girls were on the ground.

The Clay Target Shooting Championships were held throughout the year with Jack Cullinan and Harry Cooper being most successful. All participants, however ended the year shooting in higher grades.

West Darling Football heralded success for Jarrod Brander and Oliver Mangan with both being chosen for the NSW all-schools team.

A group of dedicated parents and students drove and flew a very long way to participate in the NSW State Netball Carnival held in Coffs Harbour. Sara Hancock went to Broken Hill and performed very well, resulting in 1st discuss, 1st javelin and 3rd shot put in the West Darling Athletics Carnival.

In inter-school Athletics Ashton Tilley gained the excellent result of “Overall Age Champion”
Year 11 advanced English and Drama students went to Sydney under the guidance of Emily Leon and Paul Celegon to see "Once in Royal David City" a production by Michael Gow.

The Year 11 Ancient History class travelled to Lake Mungo in order to experience the site first hand before writing an archaeological report and

Year 11 also visited Sydney thoroughly enjoying their time at the Museum of Human Diseases, the shopping, surfing at Manly, the shopping, the book store, the shopping and of course being independent (whilst shopping??)

Year 10 students completed 3 weeks of work experience choosing from careers as diverse as the Truck centre to a local Pre-School. Try a Trade was again successfully held at SMGT premises and was appreciated by our students. Visits to La Trobe, Suni TAFE, and University information sessions were also highlights. Work Placement was undertaken by our year 11 and 12 students: placements in automotive, animal studies, construction and engineering being popular. Sharma Woods won first prize in a design competition for the Sun-raysia Careers network.

Our ANZAC service was a highlight for me as was the ANZAC service in Wentworth with a number of our students and staff marching and participating in the service. Our captains certainly did us proud both in the presentation of the wreath and their excellent speeches. The latter being picked up on a news "grab" on the local news later that evening.

A number of our students both worked and participated in the Wentworth Show. A Selection of cakes were entered from students of the Food Technology classes. Prize Winners included Hannah, Madi, Shawna, Cody, Stacey & Zach. “Well done to these students.”

One again the SRC under the guidance of Mrs Maddi Johnson ably assisted by Ted O'Shannessy ran our socials using the themes of Sport, the Jungle and Movies/TV program themes. All were well attended.

Our Formal and Leavers dinner were also highlights for me, well organised and fun nights for all. The photo booth and music, the gowns and suits (well I’m not sure about Callums’), great speeches and a warm and caring atmosphere all made the nights very special for our students.

The year 6 Transition and Orientation Program under the guidance of Ms Watson and Mr Driscoll and ably assisted by Mrs Bradley had many events throughout the year culminating with an evening of information to parents and two 1/2 day "Coomealla Experiences". The evening session was well attended and parents had the opportunity to meet staff and ask questions in preparation for their children starting at Coomealla High School in 2015. Many parents also viewed photos from the past; bringing back many happy memories. They were also fortunate in receiving a school magazine from last year; a pictorial of all the wonderful things that we spoke about on the night and that Coomealla High School has to offer. Our student transition days were well attended also. The year 6 students and some of their teachers participated in activities such as Woodwork, Art, Science and Drama.

What a marathon year and this was just a snapshot and not everything!

However none of these events/experiences could have occurred without the support of staff and parents and my sincere thanks go to you for making these opportunities possible. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the P & C, the teaching staff, SASS staff, Year Advisors and Executive team for all their hard work throughout 2014. Finally I would like to thank the “Jo’s”; Mrs Pardoe and Ms Crowley who have truly been my “right hand women “ throughout the year.

A safe and Happy Christmas to you all

Jo Scott
Principal
Leavers Dinner
The leaver dinner was a great success for our Graduating Students who each began high school 6 years ago.

Graduating from High School is our contemporary rite of passage, because you are truly leaving your childhood behind you... and beginning a new chapter in your lives. It is a legitimate celebration, calling for a few congratulatory remarks; after all, not everyone sails through high school without some hiccups – despite all the caring support that takes place and not all students achieve their HSC.

I would take this opportunity to offer some observation that might be worth reflection: Don’t spend so much time trying to choose the perfect opportunity, that you miss the right opportunity. Recognise that there will be failures and acknowledge that there will be obstacles but you will learn from your mistakes and the mistakes of others.

No matter where you go or what you do, there will be challenges ahead. What I’m asking from each of you, is to meet those challenges straight on with head held high and your heard wide open. It’s not enough to simply try to get by in life. That doesn’t move the world forward; the world is more malleable than you think and it’s waiting for you to make your mark on it.

You must try to excel in everything you do; strive for excellence in every task, large or small.

Respect yourself. Take charge of your own life and don’t waste your time trying to fit in, be yourself. Be the kind of person that other people want to model their lives after, you don’t get to be that way by following the crowd or taking the line of least resistance.

If you have to worry about getting caught, you’re making the wrong decisions. Base your life choice on a morality that you have chosen carefully and that you can live with proudly.

A huge debt of gratitude is due to Lynne Wesolek who works so hard in hard in preparing everything so beautifully from the menus to the awards, and to Bonnie Ward without whose assistance and direction the graduation just would not be the same.

All the best in your endeavours.

Mr M. Johnston
Links To Learning Ceremony
Links to Learning Presentation morning tea was held on Wednesday the 3rd December for all students, teachers and staff members involved with the 2014 pilot program.

Ms Scott, the Principal took time out of her busy schedule to attend and present students and teachers with their certificates of appreciation.

WIN television attended the morning taking film of the presentation, the Mural and the garden areas, showcasing just some of the work done within the program.

Once again a big thank you to the following organisations that assisted: BMEET, CHAC, Martin O’Rourke NRL Development Officer, Riverina TAFE College, 2 Beautifulicious, Debbie Owen, Dareton Take away, Sunraysia Indigenous Uniting Church and Teachers and Staff at Coomealla High School.

Di Brown
Students comment on the year!

- Amber Thompson Yr 7  Socials because they’re fun
- **Brandon Stanborough Yr 9**  Period 5
- Fletcher Collins Yr 7  Making it to the West Darling Football Team and coming runners up
- Brad Ricardi Yr 7  Beating my high jump score
- Jade Pohliner Yr 10  Calling pretty much every teacher mum at least once through the whole year
- Tamara Field Yr 8  Getting hit in the head with a lolly and thought I ran into a tree
- Megan Clothier Yr 9  Inter school cricket
- Chloe Hyde Yr 7  The school social was fun
- Chloe Thompson Yr 7  When Lucy Stephens made one of the baby piglets squeal and then the mother pig started to chase us
- **Phoebe Sullivan Yr 7**  When a baby rabbit peed on me
- Dean Garraway Yr 11  Got given two straws when I got a ice-break
- Ashton Tilley Yr 7  Sport with Miss Parker
- Becca Holme Yr 12  Year 9 and 10 cooking, taking ingredients off everyone’s trays to always have the best
- Meg Richardson Yr 6  When year 11 made a mud cake and everyone ate dirt.
Ziggie Vincent Yr 8                               Mrs Barkers PE class

Mitch Bysouth Yr 7                   Socials cause they are cool

Eliza Collier Yr 7                   When Jade and I got chased by Bubbles the cow

Rhonda Yr 9                           Hanging out with school play people

**JUSTIN H YR 7**                    **PLAYING BASKETBALL**

Jasmine Pohlner Yr 8                  Achieving my goals in sport

Murphy Baird Yr 7                     Interschool soccer because it was a great day

Maddy Pollesei Yr 11                 When a boy was running on the wet grass after it rained and slipped over. It was hilarious

Gary Mitchell Yr 11                   Miss Philps Aboriginal study class

Alston Cook Yr 8                      Disco

**Lee Evans Yr 7**                   **Age champion in swimming**

Dominik Robinson Yr 7                 Good marks

Lachlan Norris Yr 8                   Mitch locking himself in with the piglets

Jasmine Page Yr 11                    School camp because I got to see new things

Elliott Driscoll Yr 7                 When I got merit awards at the end of term assembly
## Term 1  
**February 2015**

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<td>Interschool swimming carnival</td>
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<td>Year 7 Camp – Pam Bradley</td>
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**Quotable Quote:**

_A man should look for what is, and not for what he thinks should be._

Albert Einstein
## Term 1
### March 2015

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### Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Have a safe and happy holiday and we will see you all bright and early in 2015