



CHESSO NEWS

CHESTER HILL HIGH SCHOOL
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Term 2 Issue 1

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Over the last couple of months a number of events have impacted or will impact on the student and teacher life at Chester Hill. Amongst these was the fire at Chester Hill North PS, some real concerns over students using social media and all the assessment and reporting, including NAPLAN processes that are underway. One of the things that has changed since the last newsletter is the State government who announced that the Dept of Education and Training (DET) will now be called the Dept. of Education and Community (DEC).

Chester Hill North PS Fire

On the 7th April, there was a major fire at Chester Hill North PS. The parents of the Primary students were obviously very concerned about the safety of their children. Despite the emergency, all students and staff were safe largely because there were effective and well rehearsed emergency plans in place. Parents can also be assured that Chester Hill HS has full emergency plans in place that are also rehearsed regularly. All schools have to comply with strict OH&S requirements and these involve all manner of safety measures. We are audited by DEC on the basis of our

compliance with safety standards. This means that on a regular basis we have drills for evacuation or 'lock down'. These are either random, where staff and students do not know when the drill will take place or they are 'timetabled' where staff know when they will take place.

I would also like to thank the staff at Chester Hill HS who made the CHNPS students and staff feel welcome here. I was very proud of the way in which they calmly and professionally dealt with the emergency.

Social Media

Schools reflect the reality of the communities they serve. All schools, public or private, wealthy or poor, have problems regarding bullying. Some research shows that up to 90% of people have been bullied in their lives. This can take place at school, in the home, at sport or at work. One of the greatest concerns we as a school have for the wellbeing of our students is the rise of the negative consequences of social media such as *Facebook*. The issue has been prominent in the media because of the negative implications for all students and their families if the social networking is abused. One of these negatives is the rise in the incidence of

‘cyber-bullying’. However there is a great difference between the more ‘traditional’ forms and cyber-bullying. The older type of bullying can be left behind if the person can remove themselves from that group. This is not to say it goes away but you can find some refuge from it. With cyber-bullying the problem is that there can be no refuge for young people because they are so socially networked. While someone could argue that they just switch off their phones or computers to avoid the bullying, it ignores the reality of our daughters and sons’ generation.

Generally speaking, Australian society is regarded as an early adopter of new technologies. Nearly 10 million Australians use social networking sites (Source: Nielsen Research, 2010) and a majority of these are younger people. Australians spend more time on these sites than any other nation. For instance, In January 2011, 9.8 million Australians visited Facebook while another 6.7 million visited YouTube and another million used Twitter. These figures which are only for one month, represent 75% of our society using this technology. On average, Australians clock up seven hours a month. Younger people on average use them for over 20 hours per month. At anyone stage, 50% of social networking media users are silently observing online conversations without getting involved. The point of all this is that your children are using social media whether you know it or not. Does your teenager have a mobile phone? Does she or he have access to a computer? Remember all Yr. 9 students are given one. Then they are networking. Therefore it becomes very difficult for them to avoid the bullying because other students also receive the texts and can relate the nasty messages directly to the victim.

Chester Hill HS has a very strict policy regarding cyber-bullying. If we find any instance of cyber-bullying we will call the

police. Cyber-bullying is against the law. Already action of this kind has been taken. If any parent has any concerns about this issue, or suspect your child is the victim, we urge you to contact the school immediately and we will take appropriate action if necessary.

Reports and NAPLAN

Term two is always the term of reporting. This year CHHS has undertaken a new reporting format which will be seen when the Yr.12 reports are distributed soon. The new system, like all new systems has had a few teething problems and this has slowed the report processing. Unfortunately for these technical reasons, the mid-year parent–teacher night has had to be delayed until Wednesday 27th July, in the second week of Term 3.

While this newsletter is being distributed, every Yr. 7 & 9 student will be sitting the National Assessment Program, Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). I would like to discuss some misconceptions associated with the testing. Many people believe that NAPLAN measures basic literacy and numeracy skills. Indeed, politicians and other educational commentators often claim that 30% of Australian students are functionally illiterate and that the testing proves that this is the case. These claims are based on the fact that students (mostly male, often from Aboriginal, Pacifica or Arabic speaking backgrounds) don’t reach the expected benchmarks that NAPLAN sets out to measure. On the surface it looks that this is the case, so long as people believe that NAPLAN is measuring basic literacy and numeracy. It is not. NAPLAN testing is designed so that students are able to be ranked on certain ‘Band’ scales. To do this NAPLAN tests have ‘discriminator’ questions where the testers know that only 10% of students will get them correct. The questions most students get wrong are

comparatively difficult questions. Therefore only 10% of students can reach the top band. The frequency of this harder type of question has increased over the past couple of years as the first NAPLAN test was considered too easy.

The reason for mentioning this is that NAPLAN actually identifies the types of skills that the average student (if there is such a thing) can't currently achieve without assistance. These skills often involve higher-order thinking such as hypothesising, analysing and synthesising information. NAPLAN is really testing the student's ability to think conceptually. The purpose of NAPLAN is to help teachers identify where students are weaker and then to set about improving these skills by direct teaching. There are many resources and programs that have been created by DEC to support teachers to do this successfully. As part of CHHS's commitment to improving our students' abilities in these areas we devoted a whole day's training to addressing the issue on our school development day.

School Development Day

On the first day of Term 2, all staff worked assiduously to produce teaching material that will be used to support our students' performance in NAPLAN. As a National Partnerships school, we have had to undertake a deep analysis of our results and one of the main areas identified for improvement was the area of inferential reading skills. This means that students find it more difficult to answer questions on text where the meaning is not directly stated in the text but inferred from the presented information. The teachers worked on developing teaching sequences that directly addressed this very issue. They also worked ICT into the teaching program. This process should benefit all students. The evaluations of the training day were very positive with the

vast majority of teachers agreeing that the day was accessible, useful and relevant.

Teaching English Language Learners (TELL) program

As part of the National Partnerships funding, the TELL program will be delivered as a Professional Learning opportunity. The program is designed to develop skills in teaching students from language backgrounds other than English. Over one third of the staff have volunteered to take part. This is a wonderful indicator of the dedication and professionalism of the staff.

Hassan Raza

One of our students, **Hassan Raza** won the inaugural inter-IEC public speaking competition. The competition was hot and **Hassan** performed very articulately on the day. We hope to expand the competition to include all NSW IECs next year. Congratulations **Hassan**.

Brian Miller

National Partnerships Update

Welcome back to Term 2. This is an exciting term for the Cheso community as we continue with our many National Partnerships initiatives.

Congratulations to **Brendon Brown** who has been elected as the Senior Aboriginal SRC Representative. He was elected by our staff as an outstanding role model and leader not only in the Aboriginal student community but also in the whole school community. Congratulations!!

This term we will also be celebrating Reconciliation Week with various activities being planned across the school and across all KLAs.

Our mural is looking amazing and a huge

thank you to **Helen Apostle** and **Janice Bruny** for the many hours of hard work under the blazing sun. It looks fantastic.

Staff at our school have been participating in various workshops to improve the learning outcomes of our students.

Thank you to **Ms Panizzolo** and **Ms Melville** and the Middle Band Team for their outstanding workshops aimed at improving students' engagement and literacy skills by providing staff with strategies to assist students in maximising extended response questions.

A large number of our staff are currently undertaking training in ESL Pedagogy by participating in the TELL Program being offered by **Mr Miller**. This program runs after school for the next two terms and it aims at upskilling teachers to better meet the needs of our LBOTE students.

We have recently held an information evening for the parents of students in Year9B to inform them about the upcoming opportunity for these students to participate in additional work experience. This evening was well attended by all and a huge thank you to all staff who presented that evening and **Ms Fenton** for her organisation.

This term will also see the launch of our Intensive Numeracy Program which will assist students by strengthening their problem solving skills and improving their information retrieval skills in Maths.

Our vision for Cheso is to see happy students engaged in their learning and achieving their potential. If you have any suggestions or questions please contact me.

Ms Mateus

DP National Partnerships

Aboriginal News

SRC

Congratulations to **Brandon Brown** (Yr 12) for being elected to stand as the Aboriginal voice with the SRC. I know that Brandon will be an excellent spokesman for his fellow Aboriginal students.

Scholarships

Brandon, alongside **Taminya Brown** (Yr 11) have both received Scholarships from Kari to assist with their educational needs. This small gift will allow the purchase of uniforms and schoolbooks.

Cadetships

Brandon and **Taminya** have both received cadetships. Every Friday **Brandon** will be working at Parramatta's Juvenile Justice Centre and **Taminya** will be working every Wednesday at ANZ bank in Wetherill Park. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn work skills such as responsibility, leadership and communication skills. I wish them well at such endeavours.

Mentoring

Brother Black (Shannon William) provides mentoring to some of the students at the school. **Kyle Cain** (Yr 8) **Jye Brown** (Yr 8), **Daniel Treyvaud** (Yr 10) and **Adam Treyvaud** (Yr 9) will be completing Aboriginal dancing, Rap dancing, podcasting and recording music with **Brother**.

Aboriginal Support Staff

A big thank you to **Mel Brown**. **Mel** is an invaluable member of the Aboriginal team at Chester Hill High School and her hard work is much appreciated.

Aboriginal Mural

The much anticipated Aboriginal Mural which has been painted by Aboriginal artist **Janice Bruny** and the Aboriginal students is nearly complete. All people involved have

been working hard in finishing the serpent snake and goanna and we will keep you posted on the huge unveiling event - when the masterpiece will be revealed!



Important Dates

Sorry Day **Thursday 26th May**

Reconciliation Week

Theme: Reconciliation; Let's Talk
Recognition; You, Me, Us

Friday 27th May - Friday 3rd June

Naidoc Week

Theme: Change - The Next Step is Ours
Sunday 3rd - Sunday 10th July

Aboriginal P&F Meeting - Wednesday 1st June at 3.15pm until 4.15pm

Ms H. Apostle

N.P. Update - The Aboriginal Program - an Interview with Ms Apostle

Helen Apostle, an Aboriginal Support teacher at Chester Hill High School in Sydney's west, recently sat down and had a chat with me. After 25 years of teaching, she has been given a new role in the community, which involves a mob of 17 Aboriginal High School students.

So Helen, you have been teaching for 25 years, why did you become a teacher?

I became a teacher because I love working with children, it's something that I have always

wanted to do.

And how did you get involved with the Indigenous program?

The Deputy Principal at Chester Hill High School suggested the job to me, as she believed that I would be the best person to fulfil this position. She needed someone who was kind, empathetic and with a lot of experience. She said the successful candidate would also need good communication skills, as they would have to chat with many families and other teachers. A position perfect for me as I love a good yarn!

Why do you think this program is important and what is your role?

It's really important to close the gap between Aboriginal Australians and non. Also my job is to help the students realise that whatever dream they have can and will be made possible. I have constructed learning outcomes and have chatted with students and parents to get them to stay in school longer. I am the students' advocate and I liaise with their parents and teachers to achieve these outcomes. I also strengthen cultural awareness via such programs such as promoting traditional art and customs.

The program also extends beyond the schoolyard and includes finding students meaningful employment and work skills. We are also involved in other programs such as the University of Technology's 'How big are your dreams' initiative which allows 2 students to be mentored, tutored and to go on social outings. Other students receive scholarships and one student has a cadetship.

How many kids are you looking after?

I'm currently looking after 17 students, which is much more than last years 7 children! I think the program has grown since Aboriginal students are no longer embarrassed to identify and with the success of last years program more students want to take part. I also have a local Aboriginal mother assisting

me once a week which is fantastic as the students really listen to her.

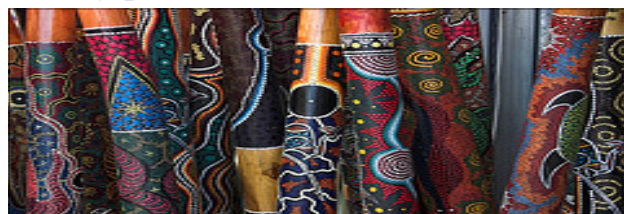
I heard that you have the kids involved with an Indigenous artist, how did that come about?

Since culture and identity is important, I decided to ask a world-renowned Aboriginal artist to assist the students with these issues. **Janice Bruny** began by painting with each student his or her totem on canvas to be taken home. Some students had to ring their grandparents to find out what their totems were. This was a fantastic exercise and increased school attendance tremendously.

Since this project was so successful, **Janice** and I proposed to the School Community that a large school mural should be painted in a prominent position in the school. **Janice** and the students are currently painting the serpent snake, which is the creator, and the goanna, which is one of the student's totems.

We are hoping it will be finished for *Naidoc Week* (3/6/2011). During this week the elders and the students' families will be present, along with the other non-Aboriginal students. We all want to have a huge unveiling ceremony, as we are all proud of the paintings. A local well-respected elder, **Uncle Greg**, will be invited and he will conduct a smoking ceremony. One of the Aboriginal students will give a speech on what reconciliation means.

The ceremony will provide the school with an opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal culture and the first Australians. And I want to make the Aboriginal students happy and proud of their heritage and culture as I am so incredibly proud of them.



Camp

Thursday the 5th and Friday the 6th of May Year 7 students were lucky enough to go on camp to Gosford. Over the two days that we were there we did many activities. Such as Abseiling on a ten metre wall, raft building in a creek, flying fox and high ropes course to name a few. The best one was the giant swing. The food was delicious and for each meal we were given a snow cone. The cabins were large, having six people in each. The mattresses were so soft.

By **Ravin Kumar** and **Adrian Kotevski**

Yr7 SRC students



Chester Hill Optical



EYE TESTING ARRANGED
BULK BILLING AVAILABLE

Ph: (02) 9644 4420

7 Mariner Centre, Waldron Rd, Chester Hill. (Opposite. Hotel)

KAREN MILLGATE BA J.P.
OPTICAL DISPENSER



SRC REPORT PARLIAMENT HOUSE



On the second week back of the term, the 2011 school captains and vice captains represented Cheso at the annual Leadership Day held at NSW Parliament House. It was an event that gathered student leaders from many high schools across the Sydney South-West region. The activities of the day included: touring Parliament House, gaining leadership advice from local MP's, and learning about parliamentary systems (how laws are made, the voting system etc.) Also, Opposition leader **Barry O'Farrell** made a quick address and discussions were had about what goes on in the Legislative Council and Legislative assembly.

As always, the best activity was saved 'til last. After having lunch at NSW parliament House, we were invited over to Government House where we would have the privilege of meeting *The Governor, Her Excellency Marie Bashir*, and her husband **Sir Nicholas Shehadie**. As everyone approached the gates that bounded the castle-like building with it's perfectly cut grass, it was clear that whoever named the place "Government HOUSE" was being modest about its grandeur. And not surprisingly, the interior was incredible too: with its 18th century English heritage, this building was like walking through a **Jane Austen** era home: complete with a grand piano, ballroom and "drawing room" where women would "withdraw" to after mealtimes. After delighting in a warm, good-humoured address by the The Governor, everyone was invited to enjoy some afternoon tea on the patio that overlooked the beautiful garden and harbour. All students had the opportunity of speaking to the Governor, as well as smile for photos with Her Excellency. Undoubtedly, that was the highlight of the day!

Overall, despite neither of the Cheso leaders looking to pursue a career in Parliament, the Leadership day provided each of us with a greater insight of the importance of: *listening to, and speaking to The People*.



Christine Ma, Elie Antoun, Natalie Ambrose, Rahmatullah Hussainizada.



Athletics Carnival

Album 2011

Photos by Nicole Tupu

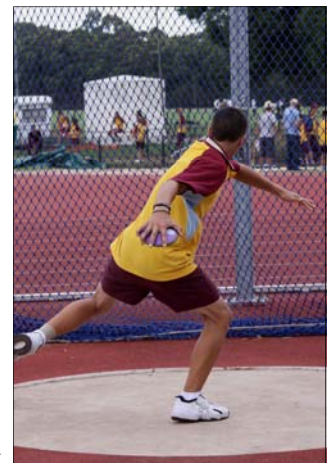


STRENGTH IN UNITY, EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Athletics Carnival

Album 2011

Photos by Ms Goodwin



STRENGTH IN UNITY, EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Corey Payne from the Bulldogs visits Cheso

In week 5, students of year 9 were greeted by Rugby League Canterbury Bulldogs player **Corey Payne**. He was there with his assistant **Tara White**. He explained to all of us about setting goals and trying to achieve them. Because we year 9 students are in a stage where we have to make hard decisions we have to make sure that these choices are right so we can have a bright future. So to tell us this, he set up a presentation that took us through his earlier life, from when he was just a small kid playing in his domestic footy team, the Chester Hill Hornets to now, all grown up and playing professional for the Bulldogs. Gee! A lot does change.

He also told us that if you want to achieve something, you have to see yourself achieving it, by planning a realistic goal and also never giving up on it. It is like the old saying 'If you fail to plan, you plan to fail'. We were also told that a sporting career will only take you so far and that when the time comes when you are too old for the running around, it is very important to have a good education. It is important to study something you like and you're good at, at University or TAFE.

At the end of it I was lucky to shake **Corey Payne's** hand. And boy! I was shaking inside. I couldn't believe I was shaking someone's hand that I see getting tackled and dumped all over the place on T.V. Some other chosen students were picked to get a group photo with **Tara** and **Corey**. He even personally signed some Bulldogs posters for the year 9's, which must have cost a fortune.

This was the best period of the day!

Delian Kotevski SRC Chester Hill High





CHESTER HILL HIGH SCHOOL



Parent/Teacher Meeting

2011

For: Parents of Year 12 students (Reports)
Parents of Year 11 students (*Progress*)

When: Monday 30th May 2011

Time: 4.00pm - 6.00pm

Where: School Hall
Miller Road Entrance

CHESTER HILL HIGH SCHOOL



Calendar - Date Change

Dear Parents/Guardians of students Years 7-11

Please note that the school has had to make a change to a previously published date.

Parent Teacher Night for Years 7-11 was to be held in Week 10, Wednesday, 29th June, 2011.

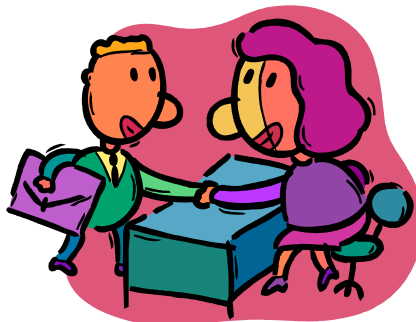
*** The new date will now be***

Term 3

Week 2

Wednesday

27th July 2011





**PLEASE JOIN US
FOR THE
15th ANNUAL
MULTICULTURAL
FLAG CEREMONY**

WHEN: Thursday 23rd June 2011
1st Performance - 9.45am **(Free)**
2nd Performance - 12.45pm **(Free)**

Friday 24th June 2011
1 Performance 11.15am **(TICKET ONLY)**
(Tickets will be available for purchase at a cost of \$5.00)

WHERE: CHHS HALL (Miller Road side)

PLEASE NOTE

PARENTS & CARERS:

Due to limited seating, you are requested to attend
ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY

SIBLINGS YEARS K TO 6:

As these are designated school days, you are **NOT**
PERMITTED to attend these performances

BANNED ITEMS

Mobile Phones MUST BE SWITCHED OFF and in school bags during the school day. This includes sport and excursions.
(Please refer to Mobile Phone Policy)



Remember

1. do not bring valuable items to school such as:
- iPods, iPhones, MP3 players etc

2. SCHOOL BAGS



The following items are banned from school:

We request your support in this matter and ask that students do not bring these items onto school grounds. If they do they will be confiscated and disposed of:



Energy Drinks



Soft Drinks



Football Cards



Chewing Gum