Highlights

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PRINCIPAL’S REPORT - Melinda Bright

Project/Product Based Learning (ProBL) and Future Learning at Leichhardt

As you know we have been dipping our toes in the water with these types of inquiry based learning for some time now. The Year 7 Learning Fair is an established example of this style of learning as is the special Year 9 Elective subject ACCORD.

An evaluation of our most recent staff development professional learning activity noted:

“The focus of our most recent school development day was on exploring future learning - pedagogy and learning spaces. The exit slip results indicated strongly that staff members wanted some of the ideas from the day to be put in place. They found the collaborative design thinking aspects most valuable and could see the value of incorporating them into teaching and learning core practices at our campus. There was a clear indication of staff being in favour of a shift to project/product based pedagogy. Teachers recognised that students must leave school with a set of twenty first century competencies including communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, innovation and global awareness.”

We are in the process now of putting together a future learning blueprint with a focus on each of the following key areas.

Currently we are digging down into the pedagogy and the curricula. In recent weeks a group of 10 teachers have been working together to plan for the introduction of a cross faculty Year 7 ProBL Unit. The unit will be start the year off for all year 7 classes and will be titled ‘Avoiding the environmental apocalypse: How can WE save the planet?’

In this particular unit of work students will be taught some of the front end skills like ideation, group project work etc. In a “tuning in” component early in the unit. Students will still cover KLA content in a rigorous fashion but will also have blocks of time for project based learning work where they will move away from teacher-directed wholegroup instruction to creative, learner-centred and collaborative work. All students will have teacher mentors throughout this first unit.

Sunny South has been collaborating with this group of teachers and supporting them through this ‘messy’ risk taking process. Once the unit has been taught in term one next year, we will evaluate and discuss whether we extend the use of this type of pedagogy into year 8 and beyond. We are very aware of feedback from recent parent consultation meetings in regard to the need for handwriting and rigour in all that we teach and agree that this must be incorporated into any change in teaching styles across the campus.

If anyone is interested in the professional reading we have most recently examined in relation to this you can access it here:

http://www.bobpearlman.org/Learning21/New%20Learning%20Environments%20for%2021st%20Century%20Skills.PDF
NAPLAN
NAPLAN results arrived home with students in years 7 and 9 at the end of last term. NAPLAN assesses aspects of literacy including reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar and writing, as well as numeracy.

Whilst NAPLAN is only a diagnostic tool we do hope students feel very positive about their results. For our part we are delighted to see a clear trend of improvement in the Year 9 writing responses. The implementation of ALARM (A Learning and Responding Matrix) has been a college wide initiative and there has been extensive teacher professional learning. It looks as though this is starting to pay off.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Once again I would remind all our students to be respectful and safe users of public transport when travelling to and from school. At times a small number of students have a large impact on the reputation of the school. If there is a designated school bus for your child’s route could you please ask them to use the dedicated school bus rather than a public bus to travel to and from school.

YEAR 10, TERM 4
I would like to stress yet again how important it will be for all students in year 10 to attend right up until the end of the year. Year 10 exams will be held in week 5 followed by a four day Taster Experience at Blackwattle Bay Campus in week 7.

Traditionally year 10 students have viewed the period of time following Taster Week as the end of their time with us. Many parents may recall hearing, or will certainly hear this year, the phrase “but there is nothing going on and we don’t have to attend”. I wanted to make it absolutely clear that this is not the case.

All faculties implement a special transition unit of work for year 10 either this term or commencing after exams. These units of work are designed to assist the students in getting used to the type of work and assessment tasks they should expect in years 11 and 12.

Copies of the assessment tasks will be provided to the teachers at Blackwattle Bay Campus to assist them in getting to know our students and their specific abilities and learning needs. I would ask all parents to support us by ensuring your child attends school right up until the end of the year. On Thursday December 11 our assembly will be devoted to saying farewell to year 10 students and wishing them luck in Stage 6 studies. The last day of school for students in year 10 is December 17, along with the rest of the school population.

New CyberSafety Resource Launched
#GameOn is a new resource for schools and parents to help highlight the dangers of the internet and assist our young people to make wise online decisions.

To learn more and access some of the videos go to http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/

Melinda Bright, Principal

English News
by Emily O'Connell
Head Teacher

YEAR 8 POETRY SLAM
In the last week of term three, all of Year 8 participated in the SSC Leichhardt Poetry Slam. It was held in the library and was a truly fabulous event. There were many students who bravely performed their original poetry in front of their peers and the audience was supportive and respectful. We also had a number of impressive multimedia entries. All the English teachers encouraged their students to take part and I would like to thank the faculty for their help and support in making this a fun and inspiring annual event. I’d also like to congratulate all the winners.

A PLEA FROM THE ENGLISH FACULTY
BOOKS NEED TO BE RETURNED

Every year there are a number of novels that get issued to students and do not get returned. This is costly for the school because we need to buy replacements. I am asking all parents and carers to check at home. If there are any books that belong to the school please get your student to return them to their English teacher before the end of the year.

Thanks for your help and cooperation.
ABORIGINAL CULTURAL DAY

On Monday 27 October Sydney Secondary College Leichhardt Campus will be holding the inaugural Aboriginal Cultural Day. The day aims at promoting and enriching Aboriginal cultural activities for all students at the school both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

The day will see all students across our campus participate in interactive activities including modern aboriginal art demonstrations and painting, how to weave a basket, make spears and traditional axes. Most of our students will also participate in Aboriginal sports games including target and field games which will culminate into the Gadigal Cup which the year groups will be competing over for the first time. Students will also be getting up close and personal with the animals of the Dreaming from Taronga Zoo.

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community leaders will be attending, with delegates from all campuses of our great college. The day will have a range Aboriginal food and other culinary delights including kangaroo sausages and damper. This will be accompanied by a range of Aboriginal films and plays which students will be able to interact with.

This is a very exciting time for Sydney Secondary College as this will be the first event of this type which recognises the diversity of some of the many Aboriginal cultural practices.

Mr Andrew Higgins
Head Teacher, HSIE

You are cordially invited to the Sydney Secondary College Leichhardt Campus’ Aboriginal Cultural Day:

Date: 27/10/2014

Time: 11:15pm-3:00pm

Come and enjoy our display and celebration of Aboriginal culture.

Activities:

• Sports and Aboriginal games
• Australian animal demonstrations
• Basket weaving and spear/axe grinding
• Art and paintings

RSVP by Thursday 23rd October to Andrew Higgins (Andrew.Higgins6@det.nsw.edu.au) OR Rebeckah Mooney (Rebeckah.Mooney@det.nsw.edu.au)
On Friday the 10 October, year 7 embarked on an HSIE excursion. Our journey to explore the past began at the IMAX cinema watching ‘Secrets of the mummies 3D’. This fit in nicely to our current topic on ancient Egypt.

“I enjoyed learning about Egypt’s past and the present attempts to discover new ways to study the ancient Egyptians” – Gabriel Truscott, 7L

After lunch (including McDonald’s and Starbucks!) we walked (for what seemed like hours!) down to the Rocks area to experience a more hands on approach, learning about Australia’s history. We divided into two groups with one group participating in a cesspits activity whilst the other group was guided through a Dreaming tour of the area.

“I learnt what happened in those decades since the First Fleet arrived to Australia from Europe. The entire HSIE excursion was a blast and a wonderful experience!” – Harry Yoo, 7L

All in all, it was a successful and enjoyable day for year 7 and the HSIE faculty!

Ms Sophia Gois, HSIE teacher.
MATHS WORLD

INTERNATIONAL WORLD MATHEMATICS DAY CELEBRATIONS – YEARS 7 & 8

On Monday 1 December 2014, we are celebrating this year’s International Mathematics Day with our year 7 and 8 students.

Students will be participating in the Interactive World of Maths Roadshow Workshop at the school.

The World of Maths Roadshow is an ideal opportunity for students to see how mathematics is applied to some real life situations.

Year 7 and 8 students will gain insight into problem solving, working in teams and developing various mathematical principles which are part of the curriculum.

The highly engaging session which will show students that making can be fun!!!

Only the first 50 students to reply from each year group will be accepted in the session. If you would like your child to have this great learning opportunity, notes with the correct money should be submitted to the front office as soon as possible.

Date: Monday 1 December 2014
Cost: $7.00 per student

PIRATE DAY CELEBRATIONS

On Friday 19 September 2014, we celebrated “Speak like a Pirate” day with a school treasure hunt. Students raced around the school where they solved clues to determine the location of the next clue. After 6 ports and an energetic chase, three year 7 boys found the Pirate flag – success.

Congratulation to Aidan Flanagan, Liam Metry and Arlo Leece who found the bounty.

However the prized possession of the ‘PiRate’ trophy can not be shared. The three students will complete in a number challenge at assembly where there can be only one winner for the exclusive prize.

Good Luck to Aidan, Liam and Arlo.

PiRates meet every Wednesday Lunch Time in 1B31. It is an opportunity for every student in the school to bring their math problems and work through them with students from all years. Everyone is welcome to join the fun.

ICAS MATHEMATICS COMPETITION RESULTS

The results of the 2014 UNSW International Competition & Assessment of Schools (ICAS) are back.

There were 3 High Distinctions and 20 Distinctions. This number has been our most successful effort at the competition.

High Distinctions were awarded to Vincent Choi (Year 7), Ethan Farrelly (Year 7) and Cori Ugarte-Foley (Year 9).

Distinctions winners
Year 7: Joseph Chung, Andrew Ta & Gabriel Truscott Prathayini
Year 8: Prathayini Ravichandran, Thenuka Kanagasabesan, Meerae Park, Adnan Rahman, Jonathan Skelton & Eileen Xu.
Year 9: William Cao, Otto Cranwell,

Congratulations to Vincent Choi who won the Principals Award.
Vincent achieved the best overall score of all Leichhardt students.