

Principal's Update 6/4/22

School Council

I wish to thank all parents, students and staff who nominated for the vacant School Council positions for 2022. All positions have now been filled following a final election for a staff representative last night. The following people are Manor Lakes P-12 Colleges 2022 school councillors.

Parent

1. Amrit Aashat
2. Houratious Albert
3. Ratul Biswas
4. Daniel Foster
5. Phill Francis
6. Sarod Khandaker
7. Chakradhar Morisetty
8. Neha Nagi

Community:

1. Delphi Anderson

Staff:

1. Michael Lanyon
2. Di Farrell
3. Renee Liprino
4. Allison Piper

Students:

1. Naomi Murgatroyd
2. Cristle Faith Ylanan

Executive Officer:

1. Steve Warner

School Council met last Thursday at 6:30. Agenda items included the future of camps (given the impact of COVID absences, and the new time in lieu provisions in the staffing agreement), financial reports, reports on aims for 2022 from each sector of the school, and reports about planned and completed works in the school to improve the facilities.

I wish to recognize the time and energy of Ken Robbins who opted not to renominate for election to School Council. Ken is passionate about schools and schooling and raised his views at meetings. Ken and I disagreed about some issues around schooling, but Ken stood up for his beliefs, stood for Council and represented the community and did not let different opinions prevent him from expressing his beliefs. I thank Ken for his time on School Council, his passion, and while many parents will not be aware of his effort, he clearly stood with the intent of improving our school.

COVID 19

We continue to have significant absences of staff and students as a result of either positive RATs, positive PCR tests, or being contacts of positive Covid cases. This is proving highly disruptive in terms of replacing staff due to the severe teacher shortage. I ask parents to be as understanding as possible when classes have to be combined and sometimes cancelled because we cannot find a replacement teacher and have no other options left to us.

I have been advised today the RAT program will continue into next term and additional RATs have been delivered and will be distributed at the beginning of next term to cover the first few weeks of school

COVID safe practices will continue in place until we are informed of any changes by the Department of Health and/or Department of Education.

Staffing

As referred to above, it is very difficult to attract new staff to the school because of a statewide shortage of teaching staff. We continue to advertise, and we continue to pick up staff. However, this is often undermined by our current teaching staff picking up promotions and positions closer to home.

Last Day of Term 1

Next Friday, 8/4, is our final day of term 1. School will finish at 1.30pm. Parents of younger children in particular should pack a recess snack, but there will not be a scheduled lunch eating time.

School resumes on Tuesday 26/4 following the ANZAC Day Public Holiday.

I wish all families a safe, and if possible, a restful, or full holiday period. I also look forward to students returning to school after the holiday period.

Student Behaviour

Staff and leadership are working with situation of deteriorated student behaviour since the return to school. This issue is shared by all schools and at a meeting with the local secondary principals, our numbers of suspensions was in the middle and suspensions per capita were in the bottom half.

We have identified in particular that vaping is becoming a growing issue with a number of students. The number of students engaged in this behaviour seems large however as a proportion of our enrolment, it is small, but still significant. Parents are requested to assist by taking a positive stance with their children regarding illegal substances being brought to school and working with school if a child is identified as having either brought a Vape to school or used a vape at school.

Many of the other behavioural issues stem from social media use; inappropriate comments are posted between students which frequently descend into abuse and threats; and accessing inappropriate sites or images and sharing them. Parents should be monitoring their child's use of social media and ensure that children are following guidelines about accessing age-appropriate material, using sites that are relevant to the recommended age and while online they behave in a way that does not bring repercussions from other users.

School Oval Works

Parents may have noted the works taking place on our school oval. These are a result of a joint agreement signed between the School Council, Department of Education and the City of Wyndham four years ago. Under the terms of this agreement, the school has full use of the oval during school day and community groups on the weekends and outside school hours. The school has the right to book the oval outside school hours for events and activities in advance. The community groups expected to use the oval include, junior football and cricket clubs, community sporting clubs and other activities suitable for an oval area.

School Council has joint control of the Oval, and if the behaviours of outside users are inappropriate, we will be working with Wyndham Council to change the hire arrangements.

The works underway include: new irrigation, light towers, re-grading of the Oval, drainage works, football goals new cricket pitch, and cricket nets. It will be proposed that School Council approve security fencing the remainder of the Oval and when the works are completed, (term four this year), the primary school students will be able to access it as an additional play space.

Stage six building upgrade

Further planning has continued on the \$12 million stage six building program. Currently, the plans are for a two-storey building containing 17 classrooms, offices, store rooms and bathroom facilities; which will be attached to the Mackay building. Very broad initial plans for the building are attached to this principal update.

These plans are very initial and room type location is being changed very frequently.

Site Plan – attached to Mackay



Ground floor



Orange = Science
Yellow = Technology

First Floor



Brown = General Classroom
Purple = Art

Professional Practice Days

Under the new agreement, PPDs have been agreed to continue. These are days additional to curriculum days, where teachers are able to identify an area of their work such as assessment, curriculum planning, resource preparation and have no face to face duties to allow them to do this work. Usually the teacher will be replaced by a casual teacher, but given the shortage of teachers this cannot be done. It has been decided by DET to allow schools to conduct whole of school PPDs, which means students will not attend. This has just been announced and I will work with leadership and School Council to determine the day this will occur and inform parents asap. I expect we will look at a Monday or Friday, but I am happy to hear alternative points of view from parents which I will pass on to School Council for their consideration.

Steve Warner
Principal
Manor Lakes P12 College
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