



Finley High School Newsletter

Principal: Mrs H McRae

Acting Deputy Principal: Mrs P Jackson

16th July, 2015

KEY DATES

July

- 16-19** Bendigo Sheep Show
17 Year Ten Student Information Day
20 Year Ten Parent and Student Information Night.
28 ICAS English Competition
31 Riverina Athletics

August

- 5** Year Twelve Study and Information Night
Parent Teacher Night – all years
21 HSC Trial Exams
24-25 HSC Trial Exams
24 Year Seven Immunisation

September

- 2** Senior Social
3 Years Nine and Ten Future Moves Campus Visit
17 Year Twelve Formal Assembly
Year Twelve Graduation Dinner

Principal's Report

Welcome Back

Term Three has started with a very cold week of school.

On Monday, teachers had a staff development day. Guest speakers presented workshops on Work, Health and Safety and the role of a Speech Pathologist. Later in the day teacher developed strategies under the "How2Learn" structure, understanding ways to encourage students to improve their thinking skills. Staff also reviewed the student responses from the "Tell them from me" survey they completed in Term one. All sessions were evaluated as relevant and meaningful. Thank you to Robyn O'Leary, Wendy Coates, Vanessa Bush and Tricia Jackson for their presentations.

Uniform

It is terrific to see many students in full winter uniform. It looks great. I would like to thank parents for their support of the school's uniform policy. A quick reminder that tracksuit pants, leggings and hoodies are NOT a part of the school uniform and that shoes should be black, leather covered in shoes.

Staffing

Mrs McNamara leaves us next Wednesday to commence her maternity leave. She will be replaced by Ms Amy Braine and Ms Stratton will remain as the Year Seven Adviser. I would like to wish Mrs McNamara all the best in her planning for and her welcoming of her new son or daughter into the world.

Shania Bentley

We are excited to announce that Shania Bentley will be travelling to Sydney next week to be interviewed as a state finalist in the NSW Training Awards School Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year. Shania won the regional event in Wagga Wagga at the end of last term. We wish her every success in this event and know that she will do herself, her family, her employer and her school proud.

School Fees

Invoices went out at the end of last term for subject contributions and school fees. Thank you to those parents who have already paid their fees.

It is vital that ALL subject contributions are paid as these provide specific resources for your child to use in their chosen subjects and electives. While school fees are voluntary, without them we are placed in a position where we cannot offer students the best resources possible in the classroom and beyond.

Please make paying your school contributions and fees a priority.

Canberra Football Trip

Best wishes go to the under 15s girls and boys football teams who will travel to Canberra in Week Three to participate in the Giants Cup finals. We know they will give every game their absolute best.

Busy in the Ag. Farm

At the end of this week, the Finley High School Agricultural Team will travel to Bendigo for the Australian Sheep and Wool Show.

This is one of the major events on the Agricultural Team agenda and we have had ongoing success with our sheep and our student leaders and judges. We wish the team well in their travels and competitions and thank Mr Webb and Mrs O'Leary for their ongoing efforts with the students they teach.

In the school holidays, Rosie Archer and Chris Wright also went to Bendigo to compete at the Bendigo Winter Fair. Led by Mr and Mrs O'Hara, the students had a terrific time and once again showed what excellence at Finley High is all about.

Surveys and the Senior Curriculum

Thank you to the parents, students and staff who responded to the survey about the Senior Compressed Curriculum as it currently operates at Finley High School.

As a result of the responses from students, staff and parents, I have written a letter (attached) to all parents inviting them to a forum to discuss the way in which we teach senior students at the moment. As we are about to commence planning for subject selections for all years, it is timely that we discuss this now.

I have included a proposal from the staff of the school which will form the basis of the discussion.

The forum will commence at 7pm next Monday 20th July in the hall.

This is an important date for your diary and I hope to see as many parents (particularly of Years Ten and Eleven students) as possible.

Subject Selections

Students in Years Ten and Eleven will be given a prospectus of senior subjects to look at in order to make some choices about what they wish to study in the senior school. Mr Whitty and I will go through making appropriate subject selections with them. This year there will also be an interview process with all Year Ten students to discuss their subject choices to make sure students are choosing subjects which suit their interests and abilities. In this way we hope that the subject lines are the best fit for the students in the senior school.

Helen McRae
Principal

A Walk Through One of the Art Rooms

The Visual Arts Department continues to be a place of peace and creativity. Year Ten students are presently studying 'Expressionism' and have been freeing their minds with bold colour and expressive brushwork.... Grace Piesley's creature and Ally Boyd's Bird seen below-



Year Twelve are working solidly on their Majors.

Pieces from their folio shown below Warren Pitt's 'Superhero' and Bonnie Vogel's 'Face'



Free, Fresh & Fit

Next Thursday the 23rd July our Year Seven students will be attending the NSW Riverina Schools Program Free, Fresh and Fit. The program is run at our school and is at no cost. It is aimed to educate students in Year Seven on the health effects of smoking, second hand smoke and peer pressure using interactive activities to promote a healthy and active lifestyle through healthy food choices and physical activity.

Jodi Brown
Student Support Officer

Project Rockit!

On Friday 24th July our students in Years Seven to Ten will be attending a Project Rockit session called DOT.COM. This is a highly interactive and engaging program delivered across schools. It aims to bring students together for an empowering approach to cyber bullying and personal leadership. Students develop an understanding and empathy for targets of cyber bullying and are encouraged to develop a supportive online culture.

This program has kindly been organised and funded by our local organization, Intereach. It is a fantastic opportunity for our students and is greatly appreciated.

Jodi Brown
Student Support Officer

Trade Careers and Aboriginal Cultural Day

The 2015 Trade career day will occur on Wednesday 22nd July at Wodonga Senior Secondary College. This exciting day is aimed at schools in North East Victoria and the Albury region of Southern NSW. The purpose of the day is to encourage students to discover different aspects of trades that they can aspire to post school and the various training providers available to help them achieve their goals.

For more information please contact Jim Morris on MRJ@wssc.vic.edu.au

CANTEEN ROSTER

Canteen Contact and Number
Mrs Kaylene Dawe 5883 1105
....LADIES, Please note 10am start....

July

17	M McCaw, C Moloney
20	M Read, C Pitt
21	F Aull
22	J Blackmore
23	S Robertson
24	M Haintz, K Barry
27	A Lee, M Kleinschmidt
28	
29	D Dalgliesh
30	S Robinson
31	K Litchfield, T Jones

Finley High School P&C

Wednesday 12th August 2015
7pm in the staff common room.

The P&C meet every second
Wednesday of the month.
Everyone is welcome to attend.

fhspandcassociation@gmail.com

Community Announcements

'Ignite the spark'

Presented by Julie Cross

Inspiring, empowering and re-energising a community!

Empowering women, inspiring men, nurturing children and challenging teenagers..... it is about YOU!

Julie is a multi-award winning passionate speaker and a non-award winning mother of two. She speaks nationally and internationally to a variety of audiences and is most passionate about empowering our next generation.

Her message is frequently described as 'life-changing' and she is so excited to be sharing this special date with you.

Date: Wednesday 22nd July
Venue: Finley RSC
Time: 7:30pm to 9pm
Cost: \$35 (all profits go to Finley Hospital)

Tickets are available from Lindy 0415835129 or Finley HQ Gym.

Junior Aviator Day

Saturday 1st August 2015, 10am – 5pm at the Tocumwal Aerodrome

The Southern Riverina Gliding Club is holding a Junior Aviator's Day for 14 – 25 year olds who are interested in flying or a career in aviation.

Day's program includes:

- 10:00 - Information sessions on the history of flight – the first aviators, principles of flight, meteorology, the first steps in learning to fly, career opportunities in the aviation industry, competition flying, maintenance and safety.
- 12:00 - An opportunity to sit in a power plane and glider, operate the controls and learn what they do (while on the ground).
- 1:00 - BBQ lunch
- 1:30 – 5:00 - Using a simulator to learn how to fly (provided by the Gliding Federation of Australia)
- 1:30 – 5:00 - Free Introductory Air Experience Flights – in gliders (with signed parental permission.)
- 1:30 – 5:00 – Learning the role of the Duty Pilot - Actively participating in keeping a flight sheet, monitoring safety in the launch area and learning launching procedures (launch signals and running the wing) on the airfield.

Experienced club instructors including four times World Gliding Champion, Ingo Renner, will be available for the days activities. Videos on flight and gliding will be a part of the morning program.

The cost is \$30, payable on registration and includes lunch.

Don't miss out on this great opportunity and register now as numbers will be limited.

All participants will receive an information package on gliding plus a DVD.

Parents and carers are also welcome as we understand that some students may have considerable distances to travel.

Enquiries and registration to club secretary Judy Renner, 0358 743 052, 0427 141 241 or email renner@netspace.net.au

Possible changes to the Finley High School Senior Curriculum

Background information

In 2012, under the leadership of Bernie Roebuck, the Finley High School community decided to move to a compressed curriculum structure in the senior school. This structure meant that students in Years Eleven and Twelve would complete three subjects for their HSC in Year Eleven and the next three subjects for their HSC in Year Twelve. Students study three courses at double the pace. The reasons behind this move were:

- To broaden the number of subjects offered to the senior students, each line having eight to nine subjects to choose from instead of four. This would enable students a better chance of studying the subjects that they want to do.
- Reduce the down time at the end of Year Ten.
- Reducing the stress for students as they only have three subjects to study for and not six.
- Maintaining Finley High School as a school of high achievers

Evaluation

At the end of last year, all Year Twelve students were surveyed as they left school on the positives and negatives of the model. A similar survey was given to the current Year Eleven and Twelve students, Year Eleven and Twelve parents and all teaching staff last term. This is what we found:

What the students liked:

- enjoyed having only three subjects to study
- they liked having more variety in the subjects
- thought exam time was less stressful with only three exams
- some enjoyed having two teachers

What the students didn't like:

- work was covered too quickly and there was too little time to absorb and consolidate
- assessment tasks were too frequent coming one after the other
- the workload was huge
- students constantly felt stressed and under pressure over the two years
- completing practical components of courses was difficult
- there is a lot of work to catch up when away from school

The comments across Year Twelve, 2014, Year Eleven, 2015 and Year Twelve, 2015 were consistent.

What the parents liked:

- that the students can focus on only three subjects
- that the students have greater subject choice
- having two teachers per subject

What the parents didn't like:

- no time for students to absorb concepts
- difficult to catch up on work missed from being absent

- too little time to absorb concepts
- increased stress levels in their children
- overwhelming workload
- too long without studying English
- Year Eleven students may be too immature to complete HSC and compete with older Year Twelve students

This survey was sent out on the school newsletter during the second last week of term. We received fourteen replies from parents.

What the teachers liked:

- Capacity to offer and teach more subjects
- All students doing 12 units
- Suited to mature, hardworking, motivated students
- Collaborating with each other on classes
- Smaller class sizes in the Junior school

What the teachers didn't like:

- No time for students to reflect on new concepts before learning the next concept
- Time lost for extra-curricular activities impacts greatly on time to teach syllabus
- Locks students into and out of studying at Finley High School in the senior school
- Limited time to form more meaningful relationship with students so important to their success
- Some students are too immature in Year Eleven to best meet the demands of studying for the HSC
- Curriculum is delivered too fast
- Teacher and student burnout

It is clear that there are pros and cons to this compressed curriculum model and we are all conscious of doing what is in the best interests of the students.

From the student, parent and staff surveys, it seems that many sections of our school community would like to return to the "traditional" model of learning in the senior school. This has issues and problems as outlined above. We still want to offer a broad curriculum and guarantee the best outcomes for our students. This begins with engaging Year Ten more fully in the process of learning, studying and achieving their best.

Forum

I would like to invite all parents and carers, but particularly parents and carers of our current Year Ten and Eleven students, to a forum to discuss this data and a possible proposal for 2016 and beyond. This meeting will be Monday 20th July at 7pm in the school hall.

The Proposal

That in 2016, we go back to the more traditional model for Year Eleven with some extensive preparation of students in Year Ten, to help them study in the senior school, to happen during Term Four. During 2016, staff will investigate other ways in which we can extend our curriculum choice while still giving our senior students the time they need to thoroughly prepare for their HSC in Year Twelve.

Year 12, 2016 will complete their HSC as they started, under the compressed curriculum model. I will use school funds to ensure that they are offered the full array of courses possible and will staff as many electives as possible to enable a broad range of subjects to run. This means they will be in classes with only Year Twelve students.

Likewise in Year Eleven, I will attempt to broaden their choice as much as possible so that they are able to study subjects in which they can achieve their best.

Throughout the remainder of 2015 and 2016, teachers have volunteered to form teams to investigate how to overcome some of the limitations of the ‘traditional’ model as well as looking at developing good study habits in students across the school, and raise the expectations of student success across the whole school community.

Neither model is ideal for Finley High School. What has been made clear is that a culture of learning and achieving ones best takes commitment and time. Time is what the college model lacks to develop a strong understanding of concepts and to develop the meaningful relationships with teachers that have historically proven to be very influential in students achieving their best. Subject choice is more limited in the more “traditional” model. We cannot work on time... but we can work on subject choice and how we utilise our resources.

Please come along to discuss these ideas with myself and the executive of the school in the hope that we can improve the learning outcomes of all students at Finley High School. Finley High School hall - Monday July 20th at 7pm.

Helen McRae