

Balcatta Update

11 February 2022

From the Principal

It has been a busy start to the term, while at the same time ensuring our school community is COVID compliant.

I endeavor to get the latest COVID information to you as soon as possible and I acknowledge there have been occasions when you have received numerous messages from the school, but it is important I keep you updated.

Thank you to the many families who have sent through positive feedback and also raised concerns.

As you are aware the school must comply with Department of Health and Department of Education mandates in regards to COVID.

One of the latest COVID guidelines which has impacted our operation, is the holding of face-to-face parent information sessions. We had a number scheduled this term, starting with the Year 7 Parent Information session which was scheduled for this week and had to be cancelled.

All future presentations will be via on-line platforms, with details of the events to be advertised soon.

Reminder, ensure your children get to school on time. The gates close at 8.45am and the last few days over 50 students have been late. This is not acceptable, as they are missing important class time and we seek your assistance to ensure your child is on time.

Events Update

Year 7 Orientation Week

To promote a smooth and seamless transition to high school for our new Year 7 students, a range of orientation activities was planned for their first week. These activities included:

- games to help students get to know each other
- a workshop delivered by our school nurse, Louise Taylor, discussing her role and how she can best support the students
- a cyber-safety activity
- a workshop delivered by *Helping Minds* on types of bullying (on-line and off-line); why people bully; and ways to prevent bullying
- a workshop delivered by our IT network support person, Michael Corlett, on setting up the students POD device and access to Connect
- an activity on how to make friends
- a Study Skills Kick Start workshop delivered by *Elevate Education* on fundamental study skills such as:
 - * Dynamic reading - How to read a text and pull out the key points, not just summarise every sentence.
 - * Note taking - How to get those ideas the students have extracted from their readings into an organised set of notes which will facilitate effective learning.

- * Conceptual learning skills - Teaching students how to break the information into its relevant parts as opposed to simply rote-learning the material.
- * Independent learning - What independent learning means and how to get it done.
- collaborative problem-solving and team work games delivered by our Physical Education department
- and finally, a whole-day at Ern Halliday Recreation Camp in Hillarys on Friday 4 February where all Year 7 students actively engaged and enjoyed participating in a range of adventure activities, including caving, archery, team-building games, orienteering, crate climbing, rock climbing and vertical ascent climbing. The aim for the day was for the students to get to know each other and promote team bonding in an outdoor classroom environment. Despite the hot weather the students had a fabulous day of activities and were impeccably behaved.

Official Opening

On Thursday 10 February, the school held the official "opening event" of our \$50 million build and redevelopment. This event was scheduled for the first week of school last year, but was cancelled due to lockdown. I was notified by Ministerial services on Tuesday, that the event was to be scaled down (from whole school assembly), to 24 in the audience and to hold the event outdoors.

I was disappointed we were not able to celebrate this milestone event as a whole school community. The event was held outside the new gym, with our Year 12 leaders, Adzi Zein and Saadah Mahmoud officiating, with a guitar performance by Callum Case-McGlade in Year 11.

Sue Ellery MLC Minister for Education and Training acknowledged the significance of the build to the Balcatta community and unveiled the plaque to officially open the building.

Please see photographs of the official opening on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

P&C News

Please Note – The scheduled Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 16 February has been cancelled.

Helen Maitland
Principal