Keeping in Touch

Newsletter No. 4 ● 2015

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Hi Everyone,

As a busy term 2 comes to a close, I’d like to take this opportunity to thank our hard working staff for all their efforts in completing 5 weeks in a row of organising and participating in our school residential programs. It began in week 3 with Primary, continuing Week 4 with Year 7 to 10, Week 5 Music Camp, Week 6 Languages Camp and finally Week 7 for the Senior Residential. It has been a huge effort on the part of all involved, including the teachers who have: stayed overnight; organised workshops; constructed and planned notes/timetables/finances; planned and supervised afternoon & evening activities; organised the HSC Seminars; and of course, our SASS staff who have prepared all of the meals for the students staying overnight. We have certainly put our new Hostel facilities to purposeful use over this term and I know that students enjoy and participate well in the organised activities, so all of the hard work paid off when we receive positive comments back after a camp.

At this point I also need to remind parents and students, that poor behaviour during residential programs at our school will not be tolerated. Students have in the past, and will continue to be sent home at the cost of the family if their behaviour is such that they have not treated the facilities or other people with the respect that is deserved. Dubbo School of Distance Education provides the Hostel facilities as convenient use for students during residential weeks to support additional learning and to target outcomes that would not be otherwise met through other teaching methods. As you can appreciate, this facility also attracts significant costs in maintaining, utilising and cleaning throughout the year. In a political environment where education faces continual cuts in funding it is more important than ever to respect and value the facilities that support improved outcomes for our students.

Last week I attended the Secondary Principal’s Council annual conference in Sydney, followed by the DE Leaders meeting. A number of key Department personnel spoke about the changes coming to Public Education in NSW and certainly the role of Principals’ in schools will be changing as these new strategic directions continue. Many of these changes are reflected already in our School Plan, so hopefully you have had a chance to read this on our website (mentioned in our last newsletter). More recently, the Department has released a new “Wellbeing Policy” for public schools (available on their website). Most beneficial in this policy is the planned training and employment of more Counsellors in schools to support students’ health and wellbeing, more than $167 million has been set aside to assist in this. Also, you may not be aware of the name change coming for DEC on the 1st of July. We will no longer be called “Department of Education and Communities” (DEC), but will revert back to an earlier version of simply, the “Department of Education” (DE)...not to be confused with “Distance Education” (DE) of course. So far we have not seen the new logo, but it will be starting to appear on documents soon. The Department has been concentrating on a variety of reforms recently, and a lot of attention and work has been placed into the new School Planning processes and the distribution of funding under the RAM (Resource Allocation Model) to schools, resulting in a wide variety of professional learning offered to school leaders this year. As we gain more information, I am sure to pass it on to you as parents and carers of our students. Should you have any questions, you are always welcome to ring and ask.

Don’t know about you, but myself and a few teachers here at DSODE are certainly looking forward to the upcoming holidays. Take care if you are on the roads, and we look forward to seeing you again in Term 3.

Debbie Murray
Relieving Principal
Hi Everyone,

This term has almost come to an end - it has been full of fantastic activities and many many camps! We have had five camps in a row this term; Primary, 7-10, Music, Languages, and then finally our Senior Residential. Staff at DSODE do an amazing job in the organisation and running of all camps. Attendance at camp is a privilege, not a right. Please be aware that staff are volunteering their time to care for your students during the time they are here; lack of participation or rudeness to staff will not be tolerated at any time, students who do not adhere to camp rules will be sent home immediately.

Year 12 students from the Western Region were provided with the opportunity to attend the Western HSC Enrichment Seminar days during the last two days of the Senior Residential. These days are organised by a team of DSODE teachers and attract students from as far as Broken Hill for the two days they run. Lecturers at these seminars include Senior HSC markers, textbook writers and experts in their subject. Each year these days get bigger and better. Thanks must go to Sue Howlett, Chris Bray and Louise Woods for their fantastic organisation of these days.

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 completed their NAPLAN tests this term. We have sent exams back to the BOSTES for marking, however if you still have outstanding exams we encourage you to return them ASAP.

As I type this message we are receiving a lot of welcome rain in Dubbo. I hope it has reached everyone who needs it, and it makes the coming few months a little easier to manage on the farm.

Have a safe and happy holiday break - I look forward to another exciting and productive term with you all!

Jenny Donovan
Relieving Deputy
Congratulations to Marleah who is the artist of the newsletter. Marleah has been working through the Creepy Crawlies’ unit. She has made all sorts of things including this beautiful caterpillar which even found a home in a nearby tree.
We value relationships within the community

Greetings from the Library

New Picture Books to Borrow

A Week without Tuesday
by Angelica Banks
This is the second book in the fantastical adventure series Tuesday McGillcuddy. It is a book where authors travel to a magical world where all books are stored, protected and loved by none other than the incredible Librarian. But all is in crisis as the worlds that authors have created are merging into one another. Chaos is taking over and the end of stories is predicted. But can Tuesday, with the help of her winged dog Baxter and adventurer Vivienne Small intervene to save the day? Best suited to book lovers aged 9+

One True Thing
by Nicole Hayes
When is a secret not a secret? When your whole life is public. Frankie is used to being a politician’s daughter, but with her mum now running for Premier, life’s a whole lot crazier than usual. All Frankie wants is to lose herself in her music. So when her best friend, Kessie, invites a student journo to interview the band, Frankie is less than thrilled. But Jake’s easy to talk to, and he seems to really like Frankie. That doesn’t stop her from wondering if he’s just after the ultimate scoop, especially when photos surface of Frankie’s mum having a secret rendezvous with a younger man. With her family falling apart around her, Frankie is determined to find out the truth – even if it means losing Jake. Suitable to be read by 15+ teenagers.

A Single Stone
by Meg McKinlay
Set in an impenetrable valley, surrounded by rock formed mountains, Jena is the leader of the girls who tunnel into the mountains crevices to harvest the magical mica that gives their village light and warmth through their freezing winters. Only girls who are wrapped to remain tiny can perform this task. Seven are sent to replicate the seven women who survived the cataclysm that sealed their valley and emerged from the mountain unscathed. The Mothers (women leaders) run the community but are their intentions open and honest or are they hiding things? What are the concoctions they keep locked in their storage facility? Jena starts to questions their motives, but will she be able to uncover the truth and reveal to all that there is actually a whole world that exists outside their valley? It is best suited for lower secondary students (Year 7&8).
You’re the kind of Girl I write songs about
by Daniel Herborn

This is a Sydney based novel following the lives of Tim, the musician and Mandy, the music lover. Tim is repeating Year 12 due to a large family problem which we begin to understand as his story progresses and is a musician songwriter who is getting a few gigs. Mandy is having a gap year, working in a café and regularly frequenting many concerts and pub band nights, uncovering all sorts of eclectic, new bands. Their paths cross when Tim is playing at a pub and they fall for each other without passing on contact details. When they finally meet again, they become inseparable. But could it be true love? They have to cross many personal hurdles first. This story is best suited to older music lovers, Year 9 and up.

Footy Dreaming
by Michael Hyde

Set in a country town where football has its own place and culture, two boys chase their dream of being drafted to the big league. Ben plays in a team where racism and sledging are accepted, and when they come up against Noah’s team which includes a number of Indigenous Australians (including Noah), tensions flare. Will Ben take a stand and potentially alienate himself and his Dad from the club that is steeped with his family’s history? This story contains lots of Aussie Rules, with just a touch of romance, and makes ideal reading for boys from Year 5 to Year 8 (Middle Years).

Carousel
by Brendan Ritchie

Nox is a struggling Arts graduate, Lizzy and Taylor are famous Canadian musicians and Rocky is your average guy who works at Target. What happens when the four of them get locked in a shopping centre in Perth with no one else and they can’t get out? A fascinating insight into the human heart and mind when faced with an eerie and strange situation. This novel explores all the ways they keep themselves sane as they struggle to understand their very strange existence. All four characters are intriguing in their own right, as well as the interactions they have between each other. The occasional swear word is used in context to the tension and circumstances they find themselves in. A very entertaining read that will best suit year 9 and up students.
Greetings from the Library

New Picture Books to Borrow

My Family for the War
by Anne C. Voorhoeve

At the start of World War II, ten-year-old Franziska Mangold is torn from her family when she boards the kindertransport in Berlin, the train that secretly took nearly 10,000 children out of Nazi territory to safety in England. Taken in by strangers who soon become more like family than her real parents, Frances (as she is known) courageously pieces together a new life for herself because she doesn’t know when or if she’ll see her true family again. Against the backdrop of war-torn London, Frances struggles with questions of identity, family, and love, and these experiences shape her into a dauntless, charming young woman. Perfect for Year 8 and up readers.

The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B
by Teresa Toten

A book with many similarities to A Fault in our Stars, including a support group setting and love and loss elements, it is wonderfully written and engaging. It provides readers clear insights into obsessive compulsive disorder and will make readers more aware and forgiving of others. When Adam meets Robyn at a support group for kids coping with OCD, he is drawn to her almost before he can take a breath. He’s determined to protect and defend her, to play Batman to her Robyn, whatever the cost. But when you’re fourteen and the everyday problems of dealing with divorced parents and step-siblings are supplemented by the challenges of OCD, it’s hard to imagine yourself falling in love.

Happy Reading!
David Strain – Teacher Librarian

“There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate’s loot on Treasure Island.”

Walt Disney
Important Information for Parents

In 2015 it is mandatory for our school to participate in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) to capture information about students with disability. A fact sheet about this data collection was included in our previous Newsletter.

DSODE will be collecting information about students with a diagnosed disability, identified medical needs and identified learning support needs. All information included in the census collection remains anonymous.

If you DO NOT want your child included in the data collection please contact me at school using either kristina.powell@det.nsw.edu.au or 5804 7061 before the end of Term 2.
Anxiety and its impact on student learning

Anxiety disorders are the most common of the mental disorders in Australia. Nearly one in 10 people will experience some type of anxiety disorder in any one year - around one in 12 women and one in eight men. Anxiety is the most common type of mental disorder experienced by children and it can be detrimental to children’s ability to learn and develop at school.

Anxiety is more than just feeling stressed or worried. Anxiety is when these anxious feelings don’t subside. The symptoms of anxiety are sometimes not all that obvious as they often develop gradually.

Common symptoms of anxiety include: hot and cold flushes, racing heart, tightening of the chest (In children they may complain of having a sore ‘tummy’ or feeling ‘sick’), snowballing worries and obsessive thinking and compulsive behaviour.

IMPACTS OF ANXIETY ON CHILDREN’S LEARNING

**Attention level**- Anxiety can cause a child to experience rapid eye movements - so the child will inevitably ‘miss’ everything happening in the environment, such as teacher instruction and the meaning of words on a page or on the computer.

**Interpretation**- A child experiencing anxiety will be unable to read a ‘neutral’ situation and react in ways which may be inappropriate to the context or situation.

**Concentration**- Anxiety can use up a lot of mental capacity and therefore interrupts the child’s ability to problem solve. The negative thoughts which can occur automatically with anxiety can escalate to a point that the child is unable to complete tasks.

**Memory**- Anxiety reduces the child’s ability to recall information and they may feel ‘blank’.

Strategies

- Try relaxation exercises - Breathe in slowly and let breath out slowly (Repeat 4 times). Blow bubbles and hold bubble.
- Tense muscles, hold for a few seconds, then let go.
- Ask children to show a confident pose when they feel anxious such as: ‘Superman’

Appropriate people to speak to include: GPs, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, student’s teacher and the Learning & Support Team (At school). These people can assist in providing support and a range of strategies in combating anxiety at home and in the learning environment.
Home visit Program
Our home visit program is well underway with Robyn and Rebecca travelling to the North-eastern part of the state to visit our preschool student in Emmaville.

Robyn and an accompanying staff member will travel to the Lithgow, Rylstone & Scone areas in early Term 3 followed by a trip to Bourke, Walgett and Coolabah later in the term.

Home visits are a very important part of our Field Services Program as they provide an opportunity to access student’s work and build stronger relationships with our preschool students and their family.

Rural and Remote Preschool Strategy
Our preschool teachers participate in regular video conferences and meetings that are part of the Rural and Remote preschool strategy. This term we joined a live ‘Group Time’ at John Brotchie Preschool at Botany in Sydney. We observed a lesson titled Let’s Count – Maths in Preschool and had the opportunity to discuss preschool maths programs and teaching practices and reflect upon how we are incorporating maths into children’s play. This was also a chance to share ideas with colleagues from other centres including Broken Hill SOTA and other remote preschools in rural communities.

We have also had a visit from our P-2 Initiatives Officer, Cathy Campbell, to discuss our current practices and the Preschool Networks we are part of. Cathy is hoping to come along to our next camp to meet some of our pre-schoolers and their families. She is also going to support our P-2 staff with professional learning opportunities around the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Some of our preschool staff will be participating in a two day Early Years Learning Community conference in Cobar next term; an initiative developed by Broken Hill and Dubbo. This will be an opportunity for our staff to network with other P-2 teachers and further develop their skills and practice.
The Importance of Play
As educators we cannot stress enough the importance of play in your child’s learning and development.

“Children need to play to develop social, emotional, cognitive (thinking) and physical skills. Play helps children to learn how to communicate with other children, resolve conflicts and solve problems. In a playful environment they are able to test, practice and refine these abilities or skills, all of which are essential to build a strong foundation for all future learning.”

(ECA Everyday Learning – About Play and Learning)

Building children’s self esteem
Parents are in an excellent position to encourage a child’s self-respect and self-esteem. Notice and comment on the child’s unique qualities, strengths and capabilities. Any desirable traits or behaviour – thoughtfulness, creativity, effort, a job well done - can and should be acknowledged by the parent. Praise is most helpful when it is specific. The parent’s comments should describe what they see and how they feel about it.

Things parents can do and say:

● Tell a child about their past accomplishments.
● Say “I love you”.
● Give a loving touch.
● Listen closely.
● Spend time with your children.
● Play and go to places with each child alone.
● Do things as a family with all the children.
● Attend important events in each child’s life…. school concert, play or soccer game.
● Write an appreciative note. Send it or leave it on the child’s bed.
● Provide opportunities for creative and intellectual development.
● Teach your child social skills.
● Acknowledge the child’s contribution to discussion or family chores.
● Say ‘thank you’ for helpful acts.
● Encourage exercise and nutrition to promote the child’s total feeling of wellbeing.
● Find positive methods to evaluate children’s efforts, ability and behaviour.

Birthdays for July
We wish the following students a very happy birthday!

Rafael 3rd July
Aiden 28th July
Tax File Numbers

As of the 1st January the Australian Tax Office has changed the process for students wishing to apply for a Tax File Number. Schools can no longer give out Tax File Number application forms. Students now need to apply online and then visit an Australia Post Office to verify their identity.

How can students apply for a TFN?

Applying online and presenting POI documents at a participating Australia Post Office is the fastest and most convenient way for students to get a TFN. More information on applying online can be found at [ato.gov.au by searching for 'QC27248']

Students who are unable to visit a participating Australia Post office will need to complete the application form Tax file number - application or enquiry for individuals form (NAT 1432). More information about lodging this form can be found at [ato.gov.au by searching for 'QC22604']

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Make sure you are checking local papers and approaching potential employers for positions. Check any apprenticeship providers in your town, for example in Dubbo Skillset. Once you find a provider you need to register with them so that they can support you in finding an Apprenticeship or Traineeship.

Year 12

Make sure that you are keeping up to date with your studies and that you are handing in all of your assessment tasks. You should also be starting to look at and think about which direction you want to take after school. If you are wanting to attend university, you need to be starting to look at which course(s) you are interested in and which universities offer them, as well as what the ATAR was for the course in 2014.

Below is a list of institutions and the dates they are holding information sessions or open days.

Whitehouse Institute of Design Summer School Holiday Workshops 2016

5 January 2016

Illustration for Fashion, Techniques for Interior Illustration, Image Styling, Sewing. Choose from 2,3,5 and 10-day Workshops. For bookings & information please email enquiry@whitehouse-design.edu.au or phone 1300 551 433
Event Management/Travel & Tourism/Sports Business Career Taster Days at Macleay College in July
Find out more here http://goo.gl/fEB6FW

ADFA Open Day
29 August, 9.00am to 4.00pm
Northcott Drive in Campbell, ACT
Contact: +61 2 6268 8201 or student.recruitment@adfa.edu.au
http://www.openday.adfa.edu.au/about.html

University of Wollongong Open Day
15 August
Northfields Avenue, Wollongong

Hunter and Central Coast School Leavers Expos for Students with Disability
Central Coast 25 June, 9.00am to 1.00pm, Mingara Recreation Club
Hunter 23 July, 9.00am to 1.00pm, Hunter Stadium
Post school options for students with a disability or ongoing medical conditions.
https://www.facebook.com/HCCExpos

If you would like more information about careers that may interest you have a look at the schools careers website (www.dsodecareers.com), the myfuture website or Jobjump website. The school’s password for the Jobjump website is magpies. Alternatively you can contact Mr Quayle on (02) 5804 7079 or email him at timothy.quayle@det.nsw.edu.au
The music team recently hosted the annual 3 day DSODE music camp for all elective students. An incredible array of talent was on display. Students worked hard to create large and small group performances, while HSC students presented solo items. A highlight of the week was the African Drumming Workshop hosted by African Drumming Australia. These were presented in a concert on Friday for parents and staff. The music department would like to thank the students for their hard work. We would also like to thank visiting staff member Lyn Lockery for all her invaluable assistance during the camp.
We are fast approaching the end of the term already. Staff are busily finalising student’s school reports (to be posted out on 24th June) and school work for term 3.

**The new Australian Curriculum.**
There has been a great deal in the media over the last few years about the ‘New Curriculum’. However as a teacher of over 25 years experience and having experienced a number of ‘new curriculums’ – they tend to put a new one out about every 8 to 10 years – little is really that new. The changes tend to be in some of the language and structure of the syllabus, not necessarily in the face to face teaching. NSW has its own syllabus, which we are required to follow, that reflects the Australian Curriculum.

In English we are still teaching students to read effectively, respond to literature, write texts and be able to speak with confidence. The aim, as stated in the NSW Syllabus is to; enable students to understand and use language effectively, appreciate, reflect on and enjoy the English language and to make meaning in ways that are imaginative, creative interpretive, critical and powerful.

One of the most important things you can do, regardless of curriculums and syllabus’ is to read to, with and in front of your child.

**Stocktake**
In mid Term 3 the primary resource room staff will be stocktaking. Please ensure resources that are not being used are returned. This way we can account for what we have, what’s missing and what needs replacing. A letter will be sent to all families with a library printout of all borrowed items as a reminder for you.

**Myall Mail**
The Myall Mail is our annual school magazine and includes an overview of school activities, achievements and students and a selection of their work. For the primary section, we would like a photo and a piece of work from each student included. We ask parents to assist us in this regard, especially travellers and students who have not visited the school, to ensure that we have a ‘head and shoulders’ photo of your student. There will be a final date for submission of work and photo.

**Photos and Privacy**
We often like to include photos of our students in this newsletter which comes out 2 times a term, our School Magazine, our website and other publications. If you have a concern with your students name and / or image being published, please ensure that the school is aware. An email to your class teacher is the best method for this.

Ciao for now!
Reading with your child!
Winter has definitely been visiting with some cooler days - perfect days for cuddling up in a chair and reading (after your school work is completed of course). Mr Strain is currently in Canada visiting his family, so let your teacher know of any special requests that you would like to be added to your Term 3 pack.

When reading a book, the following before, during and after reading habits help children to become good readers.

Before reading

• Look at the cover together, read the title, discuss with your child what they think the story might be about? If the topic of the book is something you the child would be familiar with, create a discussion about that experience.

• ‘Walk through the book’. Turn each page. Discuss what’s happening without actually reading.

During reading

• Read the book. Ask your child if they can find any patterns in the text? Are there rhyming words? Does each page begin with the same word?

• If so, get them to predict some words (cover them if you have to!)

After reading

• Talk about the book and ask key questions, get them to retell to check for understanding.

• You might also pick out some features, such as punctuation and ask, what is that dot for or why is there a question mark there?

Discuss with your child the reading process and the importance of reading every day. Discuss what makes us good readers, like using expression in our voice, making the sentence make sense if they are coming across unknown words, reading for meaning etc.

All things are difficult before they are easy

Thomas Fuller
Supervisor Concerns
We have recently had a number of conversations with some Supervisors who question their role. Please note that the role can change for each student and depends greatly on the situation, age and stage of development for each child. As a supervisor, you are our eyes and you see what happens daily and can capture the moments of learning. One of the greatest gifts for us is your ability to give us feedback on what is happening in your classroom. Mrs Egan sent an email out to her parents and (with her permission) I am reprinting an excerpt from it as I think it is totally relevant to all Supervisors from all teachers.

In some conversations I have had lately with supervisors there has been a bit of a common theme that you are all very hard on yourselves and sometimes feel like you are not doing enough some days! Please believe me you are doing a fantastic job! You are all to be admired for the work that has gone into the programs this semester. Please don’t worry if some days on paper it doesn’t look like much work. Your supervisor feedback is just as valuable to me as a big envelope of paper. Let me know on your feedback on the weekly cover sheets what’s gone on in the week that isn’t in the returns. You are there catching all of those moments that I don’t see so write them down. Feel free to email me too. Let me know what’s going well. Sometimes we get a little caught up in what the student isn’t doing or what they are having trouble with... so let’s celebrate all of the great things they do achieve in a day as well. Photograph a moment and attach it to an email! Get your students to email me... “Mrs Egan just wanted to let you know that today I understood equivalent fractions for the first time!!!!”

Private Vehicle Conveyance Claims

If your child is in Preschool or Year 7 and you intend claiming the subsidy for driving your child to a school camp, you will need to fill in a PVC Application Form.

Even if a parent has completed an Application Form when their child was in Primary it does not automatically carry through to Year 7.

If you would like a form sent or emailed to you please contact Liz Heilbronn, email elizabeth.heilbronn@det.nsw.edu.au or phone 02 5804 7009.
What a wonderful camp! With almost fifty students coming to DSODE from all over the state, it was hardly a surprise that the on-site hostel was nearly fully booked out. The annual DSODE Languages Camp held in Week 6 enabled students to work in an interactive class environment for three days to improve their language skills.

Languages staff immersed the students in the five languages offered at DSODE including German, Spanish, Italian, French and Japanese. During the day, intensive classes were offered in each language, and by night the students were welcomed to take part in language-based activities, including a trivia night focussing on the world and culture.

On their final day, the students were taken on an excursion to the zoo, where they were able to view the animals, and speak about them and their habitats in different languages.

A very big thank you to all members of the languages faculty as well as all other staff members who helped in any way. And of course, thank you to the students, who were an absolute pleasure to host and teach for the three days.

Now the preparation begins for next year!
During the winter season you may be collecting logs for firewood. Check first if the logs are home to birds or animals.

Get involved in community tree planting groups and/or plant some new trees in your own garden.

Choose trees that are native to your area and that encourage birdlife.

Calendar of Events
2015 The Year of Soils
“healthy soils for a healthy life”


25 July School Tree Day
27 July National Tree Day