6 February 2015

Principal’s Column

I am very pleased to report that we have had a wonderful start to the school year. I would particularly like to thank Ms Speers (A/Deputy Principal – Junior School), Mr McGregor (Deputy Principal – Senior School), Dr Neilson (Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning), Mr Degnian (A/Deputy Principal – Operations), Mr Gilmore, Ms Barrett (Guidance Officers) and our office staff for the tremendous work they have done in ensuring all the necessary interviews, timetables and processing of data has taken place in readiness for the beginning of the school year. Our Heads of Department and teachers have also been hard at work preparing for the beginning of the school year.

Last week-end we held the Leaders’ Retreat for our 2015 Senior Leaders at Brookfield. Thank you Guy Hawkins (Chaplain) and Ben Richardson (Year 12 YLC) for organising and leading a very successful leadership retreat over the week-end. Retreating to ACCC Brookfield the 32 senior students were skilled, personally challenged and given time to plan their programs for 2015.

On Friday, 13 February, we will formally induct all of our Junior and Senior Student Leaders on a special assembly in our Sports Hall. I look forward to working with the new leaders in 2015.

It has also been great to observe how well the Year 7 and 8s are settling into our school. Ms Green, Mr Begley (Year 7 coordinators), Ms Cash (Year 8 coordinator), the Year 10 and 11 peer supporters and Mr Bertrand, Head of Department, Junior Schooling, have made sure that our newest arrivals feel welcome.

As is the practice every term we hold an emergency evacuation/lockdown for students and staff. On Wednesday we held our first evacuation for the year, with staff and students evacuating to the oval for a roll call. It is good to report that the students conducted themselves in a very orderly manner. Please see the picture below.

Thank you to Judy Neilson, Tony Degnian, Darren McGregor, Di Briscoe, Monique Mc Mullen, Sandy McMillan, Amanda Woolmer, Amanda Sherman, Rob Lucas and Steve Gilmore who spent time at the camp over the week-end to work with the students.

Today we welcomed back our 2014 high achieving students for a special Scholars’ Assembly to acknowledge their 2014 achievements and to share with our current students their personal stories on how they achieved their Ops, Certificates and Vocational qualifications.

Deputy Principal’s Column

Welcome to another exciting school year. In the first week of school, I had a number of opportunities to speak with our senior students regarding their role at this school. As our school grows (we are in excess of 1200 students now) we are finding ways of creating a clear identity for each year level.

My initial meetings with the 2015 Year 12s have included a focus on ‘Future Me.’ We have discussed last year’s results as I find this the best way to encourage students...
to project themselves to the end of 2015 so they can start thinking about what they want to have achieved as their final outcomes. Our 2014 graduating cohort achieved excellent results including eight OP 1s and 93% students receiving an OP 1-15. No students received an OP below an 18 and approximately 2/3 of our students received an OP 1-10, this meant that most students were able to access highly competitive university courses through QTAC. Our non-OP students also received outstanding results with 99% attaining their QCE and a myriad of VET certificates were attained. At this week’s Scholars assembly we heard from our OP 1 students and also some high performing students who received VET certificate II’s.

Pit stOPs have begun for our Year 12s. Pit stOP is an acronym for Point in time, school tracking of OP. While the Pit stOP involves an OP prediction, the meeting is designed as far more than just this. Students are assigned a Key Teacher in our school as their mentor for the whole year. This mentor will periodically provide important information regarding their position in each class and will also assist with goal setting and selecting QTAC preferences. All OP bound students will have this available for the first time from Week 2 onwards.

For the Year 11s, their school year and experiences are focused around the concept of ‘Paving Pathways.’ Year 11 is the time that students need to develop their study routines and habits and be prepared to put in the difficult, foundational steps towards learning in their chosen field. I have spoken with them about expectations of at least 1-2 hours per school night to support their learning. Any less than this can result in not only underperformance, but also unnecessary stress during weeks when multiple assessments may be due. Consistently building foundations for their learning each night assists with balancing the workload across the term rather than concentrating it into a few fitful weeks.

I had the pleasure of attending the senior leaders retreat last weekend for the day. I am confident that our current leaders will achieve a lot this year and they clearly articulated their goal to have a greater proportion of students involved in activities and events. When combined, the events across the year will be staggering with school dances, sports carnivals, lunch time events, photography competition, talent quest, World’s Greatest Shave, Chillin With da Boys, Sleepout for the Homeless, Girls Night In, Guide Dogs charity events, Senior Project, Valentine’s Day fundraising, Cabaret and Trivia Nights, Dumpling days and a host of other activities to keep students involved. I look forward to working with this motivated group throughout this year.

Darren McGregor
Deputy Principal

ID Photos – Catch-up Reminder

The photographers are coming to the school on Tuesday 10 February at 9.00 am to do the ID photos for students and staff who missed out at the end of 2014. If you missed out last year make sure you available to get your photo taken in the J A Robertson Hall.

Parent Contact with Teachers

Our school is a very busy organisation and it is not always possible to have immediate contact with teachers. This is why we have a range of support staff in our school to assist.

Therefore all initial contact with teachers should flow through the school office (07 3511 3888) or admin@thegapshs.eq.edu.au.

Please do not walk into the school to find a teacher (or student), our school signs require you to go to the school office. Our Office Staff, Teachers or Support Staff will respond to your needs or questions as soon as possible.

Russell Pollock
Principal

Learning Assistance Program - Volunteers

There is an opportunity for volunteers with an educational background to become involved in our tutoring program for students.

The commitment is for a couple of hours each week to work 1 hour 1 on 1 or with small groups of students who require extra tuition in either Literacy of Numeracy.

If you are interested or know people who would like this opportunity please contact the school on admin@thegapshs.eq.edu.au with your contact details and previous educational experience.

Russell Pollock
Principal

2014 China Study Tour

Written by Jack Appleton-Seymour and Rachel Roderick

Ni Hao! (Hello!) On the morning of Thursday 27 November, 2014, sixteen Year 11 Chinese Students along with three teachers embarked on a journey of a lifetime to experience the vibrant culture of Taiwan and China. The teachers – Mr Ian Perry, Ms Tiffany Boyd and Ms Kate Mahoney – guided the students to fully immerse themselves in Chinese traditions.

Having studied Mandarin for four years with Mr Perry, the students felt confident in maximising their language skills from the moment they stepped on the plane.

The first destination was Taipei. Across three days the students wandered in awe around the bustling streets of the city. A bus trip from the north of Taiwan to the south took us to Tainan’s scooter central. Some of the highlights in Taiwan included Taipei 101, Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall, receiving an extremely warm welcome from our sister school Chong Ming Junior High School, as well as paying visits to the number one boy and girl schools in the country.

A week later the study tour travelled to Shanghai, the most densely populated city in China. In just one day, the group was shocked by the constant chaos of Shanghai’s subway whilst journeying to explore The Bund and the Shanghai Skyline, the Han City Markets, and the Jade Buddha Temple.
Another plane flight later to the north-west city of Xi’an was where the students first enjoyed temperatures below zero. From -2°C at the airport to light snow on the last day, which, for most of the group, was their first time witnessing snow, Xi’an proved to be one of the most memorable places the group would treasure forever. On the second day in Xi’an, we visited the Terracotta Warriors which were made in the Tang Dynasty as the Emperor’s army. This spectacular day of education and historical appreciation foreshadowed another fantastic day that started with snowfall and finished with a 14km bike ride around the city wall.

The group followed the cold temperatures north to China’s capital city, Beijing. The students and teachers alike glowed with excitement as they wandered through Tiananmen Square and the magnificent Forbidden City, and as they trekked up the very steep steps of the Great Wall of China. The team sat atop one of the many towers of the wonder of world and gazed at China’s brilliant mountain ranges, with most agreeing it was the best view they had ever seen. The gathering snow on each step contributed to the picturesque beauty of this incredible historical landmark, and ultimately became the biggest highlight of the trip overall.

The 2014 China Study Tour was an unforgettable journey and experience of a lifetime. The 18 day trip not only heightened the Mandarin language skills of the students, but created many new friendships and everlasting memories.

Information on how to book interviews online will be in the newsletter later in the term.

**Term Dates for 2015 and 2016**

Term dates for 2015 and 2016 for your information when planning holidays.

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**P & C News**

The first P&C meeting of 2015 is this Monday at 7.30 pm.

Hi. The P&C will meet upstairs in the Conference Room in Administration Block at 7.30 pm this Monday. Use the stairwell closest to the car park. All continuing and new members are welcome.

Our AGM will be held at the March meeting. We are especially keen to hear from any budding vice-presidents and secretaries. Any questions, please give me a call on 0414694415 or email pandcsecretary@thegapshs.eq.edu.au.

The Principal will give a school report covering:

- Student enrolments
- Future facility and grounds improvements
- Teacher Awards
- School Budget update
- University Survey projects
- Curriculum update

Thank you.

**Ross Utting**

**School Based Apprenticeship Traineeship Listing 4 February**

Below is the link to the School Based Apprenticeships Traineeships Listings for this week.

**Date Claimers**

| Friday 6 February | Scholars’ Assembly in J A Robertson Hall – Periods 4 and 6 |
Monday 9 February | P & C Meeting in Conference Room, 7.30 pm, Admin Building  
Visiting Chinese School this week
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Tuesday 10 February | ID Photos and new staff photos catch-up day in J A Robertson Hall – 9.00 am  
POPARTS Meeting – N Block
Thursday 12 February | Year 12 Modern History students to UQ
Friday 13 February | Leaders Induction in Sports Hall at 8.45 am
Monday 16 February | Music Camp departs
Tuesday 17 February | Music Camp  
District Swimming  
Year 7 The Hurting Game 9.05 am in J A Robertson Hall  
Year 8 The Hurting Game 10.40 am in J A Robertson Hall
Wednesday 18 February | Music Camp  
Year 7 Parent Information Night - J A Robertson Hall  
Year 8 Parent Information Night - Auditorium
Thursday 19 February | Music Camp
Friday 20 February | Music Camp returns  
Student versus teachers volleyball game – lunchtime – Sports Hall
Wednesday 25 February | Year 11/12 Studies evening for parents and students in J A Robertson Hall and Auditorium  
Regional Swimming
Thursday 26 February | Elevate – Time Management – J A Robertson Hall  
Regional Swimming
Friday 27 February | Year 10 Elevate – Study sensei  
Year 11 Biology students to Nudgee Beach Field Work Excursion
Monday 2 March | Year 7 Camp Maranatha, Yandina Recreation and Education Camp  
P & C Executive
Tuesday 3 March | Year 7 Camp Maranatha, Yandina Recreation and Education Camp  
Year 11 Ancient History Excursion to Abbey Museum  
Year 9/10 English Excursion to Theatre  
W1 SE Queensland Futsal

SHAPE Committee News

More students performed well in Triathlon with Year 10’s Kate Watson and Natasha Bury and Year 8 Richelle Hill making the Met North team for the state titles in Hervey Bay this month. Good luck girls we hope you all do well.

Good luck also to students competing at the regional athletics this weekend, all with the state titles in their sights.

Once again in conjunction with our Cross Country day (Friday 24 April) we will be endeavouring to raise funds with the adidas fun run as per the last two years. The forms/booklets will be arriving soon and once again you can raise money on-line. More details will follow soon, so keep an eye on the newsletter in the coming weeks.

Our sports captains Mia and Hayden have some great ideas for this year and we would love to see all students support their endeavours and help them make 2015 a great year.

The SHAPE AGM will be held on Monday 16 February at 7.00 pm in the sports hall for the election of office bearers. We are a small group and would love to see any parent join us. We have positions vacant on the committee if you are interested. If you are able to help out at any of our functions please contact us at SHAPE@thegapshs.eq.edu.au

We had three teams attend the High schools Volleyball challenge in Melbourne in December and reports are they all did very well. The U/16 girls came 11th, the U/15 girls came 7th and the U/15 boys came 6th. Well done to all players and special thanks to Mr Maclean Ms Barkman and Mr Ellis for coaching/accompanying the students.

Don’t forget our email address SHAPE@thegapshs.eq.edu.au  
Leon Bailey

Immunisation program comes to school

This year, Brisbane City Council will be providing free vaccinations for all Year 8 and Year 10 students, as part of the Queensland Health School Immunisation Program.
Year 8 and year 10 students are eligible to receive the following vaccines:

**Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)** – a 3 dose vaccine given to Year 8 students only

**Chickenpox** – a 1 dose vaccine given to Year 8 students only

**Boostrix** – a 1 dose vaccine given to both Year 8 and Year 10 students

Your child has received consent forms to take home. If you wish for your child to take part in the School Immunisation Program, please ensure that you fill in the forms correctly and return to the school ASAP. Failure to return the forms to school on time may result in your child missing out on important vaccinations.


*Please note:* All vaccinations carried out through the School Immunisation Program are performed by fully qualified registered nurses. All students are encouraged to have breakfast (or small meal) on the morning of vaccinations.

**Community Notices**

**An Exciting New Op Shop has Opened in The Gap!**
Kidney Support Network has opened an Op Shop at The Gap Village Shopping Centre, Shop 5, Corner Glenaffric Street and Waterworks Road, The Gap, (just near The Lodge Coffee Shop). It is open Monday to Friday from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm and Saturday 9.00 am -1.00 pm. www.facebook.com/kidneysupportnetwork

**Social Volleyball**
There is social volleyball in the Sports Hall every Monday evening – for details see Brisbane Volleyball Club Website/The Gap