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Principal's Communication 8 March 2024

I would like to commence this week's communications with a big thank you to our school community for the understanding and support around our school closures as a result of the recent catastrophic fire danger days. Our community has been devastated from the Pomonal and Dadswell Bridge fires and many staff, students and families have been directly affected. While we are a resilient community, it will be a long road back for our families and friends to rebuild their lives. Our college joined with the other schools in the area to help raise money to support those in need. We raised money from our swimming carnival BBQ, casual dress day and zooper dooper sale last Friday. Our final tally of \$1660 has helped push the total for the All-School Appeal to over \$10.5 thousand, truly an outstanding effort. We thank our families, students, and staff for supporting the appeal.

Our external School Review has commenced with a Preparation meeting on Thursday 1st February. This was a planning meeting to establish the procedures and focus groups for the review. The review panel consists of Charmaine Taylor - Monash University School Review Group, School Council President – Emily Dalkin, SEIL – Therese Allen, Principal – Murray Hart, Assistant Principal – Dean Greenhalgh, Challenge Partners– Louise Amor (Assistant Principal Horsham Secondary College) and Tony Hand (Principal St Arnaud College) . On Friday, 1st March, the review panel met on site to undertake the Validation Day. Validation Day involved reviewing our Pre-Review Self Evaluation from Term 3 & 4 in 2023. The panel also visited classrooms, interviewed student groups, and assessed our Professional Learning Community initiative via a presentation from Robyn Williams. The information gathered provided the panel with key focus questions and methodology for the remainder of the review. From here, external members of the panel have visited on the 7th & 8th March to interview more students, staff and parents as well as observe various aspects of the school to gather data to provide feedback to the school community. The final day on Thursday 14th March will be the presentation of the Review Panel report providing the school with a clear understanding of our current status and future improvement focus.

There has been over two months of no action from the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) in relation to our \$12 million building program. Last week, I eventually was able to contact the Victorian Schools Building Authority and was able to get the latest update. The Scope Of Works has been reviewed and is almost ready to go to tender. The scope of works includes the construction of a new Administration building (without a staff common room), redevelopment of the current administration building into 6 classrooms, redevelopment of the Assembly Hall into a Resource Centre (Library) and Auditorium, refurbishment of the three art rooms, removal of the current Library, removal of the current Year 7 Hub and attached classrooms, removal of the Year 10 block (4 classrooms) and establishment of a cleaners room. Should the final tender price and associated cost be below the \$13.125 for the project, additional "Tender Options" may be included. These include a new driveway, staff room added to the Administration building, landscaping and decking entry to the new Resource Centre/Auditorium, large bi-fold doors for entry to the Auditorium, landscaping and decking around the new Administration building, landscaping within the centre hub of the school and landscaping along the Art wing. Unfortunately, I am not confident that the final costing will provide any Tender inclusion, which will be disappointing.

Unfortunately, it is extremely regretful that I need to inform you that there have been a number of isolated incidents of racism amongst our students and towards some of our teachers and community. This is most concerning and the school will follow up each incident and take appropriate action. While these incidents may be isolated, as with the community, we are experiencing an increase in teachers from different nationalities and the school will not tolerate any form of disrespect to staff, students or families, regardless of their heritage. Our school will continue to take the educational approach to racism but we cannot do it alone, and family support is vital in educating our students around this matter.

In the last edition of Connections I mentioned how pleasing it is that students and families have embraced the new uniform. A reminder to families that shoes are to be plain Black (no other colour). Please contact the school if you need support.

Murray Hart
Principal

**Monday 11th March
Labour Day Public Holiday**

Stawell Secondary College's child safety and wellbeing policies and practices can be found on our school website: www.stawellsc.vic.edu.au. We welcome comments and feedback on these from our school community at any time. Feedback can be made to Murray Hart on 5358 1700.

RESPECT
INCLUSION
ASPIRATION
RESILIENCE
PARTICIPATION



The 2024 Stawell Secondary College Presentation Ball is rapidly approaching.

\$10 Balcony tickets are now available to purchase from the school office.

Formal dress, light supper provided.



WOULD YOUR STUDENT LIKE TO LEARN THE GUITAR?

The music department is still taking enrolments. Although most instrument spaces are filling fast, we do currently have some vacancies with our Guitar Teacher, Ron Tabuteau, for 30 minute lessons each Tuesday. There is no cost for music lessons in 2024.

We can also arrange the loan of a guitar to help your student get started. Students come out of class for their lesson. The time is rotated each week, so students are not missing out on the same subject each week.

We are incredibly fortunate to have such an experienced guitarist working at our school. This is a great opportunity to introduce your child to music. To get the lessons started for your student please contact the front office for an enrolment form.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Chinese Report

This year, the Chinese program at Stawell Secondary College will continue to offer a voluntary, after school hours **HSK Level 1** class to extend Year 7 and 8 students' language proficiency.

HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) or the Chinese Proficiency Test is an international, standardized exam which tests and rates Chinese language proficiency. It evaluates Chinese language abilities for non-native Chinese speakers in terms of using the Chinese language in their daily, academic and professional lives. The test is organised by Hanban (Chinese Language Council International).

In 2023, 11 students took the HSK Level 1 test and ALL achieved a Level 1 certificate!
Our 2024, our HSK Level 1 class will be starting on Friday 15th March. Join us if you would like to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity! It is held each Friday after-school, so requires passion and commitment!



The past few weeks of HSK have included Chinese New Year celebrations, eating lots of delicious Chinese food and the start of our studying of HSK 2. We have learnt about directions and how to describe things in our HSK 2 content to extend our language skills! Ms Ling often provides different Chinese snacks for us to try, such as the sweet rice crackers and mochi for a nice culture exposure!

- Sienna Santuccionne

Last year we did the level 1 test, and we got a nice certificate and this year we are preparing for the level 2 test. But don't be fooled, we don't constantly study, in most lessons we play interesting games improving our pronunciation, fluency and Hanzi. Overall, I would say it's a great experience and if you have any interest in Chinese and are taking the subject this year then join HSK!

- Scott Tulloch

In HSK, I've enjoyed all the learning opportunities that was given to us, like going to Melbourne for our HSK 1 test, where I ate all kinds of delicious food. It's a great experience to step out of your comfort zone and to try new things!

- Claire Scott



2024 Stawell Secondary College
China Trip!
Shanghai Disneyland!
Chengdu Panda Base!
Great Wall of China!

3rd Information Night

- Program Updates
- Trip Requirements

Where: Senior Hub
When: Wednesday
13 March 2024
What time: 7:00pm



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES

CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund will ensure that no student will miss the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors, excursion encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works and sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are part of a healthy curriculum.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. Cards must be valid with Centrelink as of 19 January 2024. Students can be aged from 6 – 18 years old. If a student is the holder of a Youth Allowance type card in their own name that is valid, the parents are eligible to apply for the CSEF.

The annual amount per student will be \$250 for every secondary school student of eligible families. Payments will be made into the applicant's school account to use towards a child's expenses relating to camps, excursion or sporting activities.

REMINDER: ALL APPLICANTS ARE ASKED TO PROVIDE THE SCHOOL WITH A COPY OF THEIR CURRENT HEALTH CARE CARD.

How to apply: Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from www.education.vic.gov.au/csef. A copy of your Centrelink Concession Card will be taken when you return the completed form to school. Applications need to be made by Friday 22 March 2024, however the sooner you apply the sooner you will receive the funds into your account.

If you have any questions please contact Marie McAloon, Business Manager.

Music Camp

Music Camp returns to Stawell Secondary College for the first time since 2021. Students and staff from Phoenix College in Ballarat spent two days working with the Stawell Secondary College Band to prepare and present a concert for our Stawell Secondary College Year 7 students. This had been an annual event in the past, with participating schools taking turns to host. It's a great chance for everyone to test and develop their skills with a larger group than is normally available in their own schools. New music and new friends made good memories for everyone.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

We had our first meeting this week with the team of 2024. We discussed numerous things including: electing our president, vice president and secretary, our guidelines, the sports trolley and the whole school survey results, possibly raising money for the fire victims, writing for the newsletter and possible recycling at our school. We have a lot planned for this year.

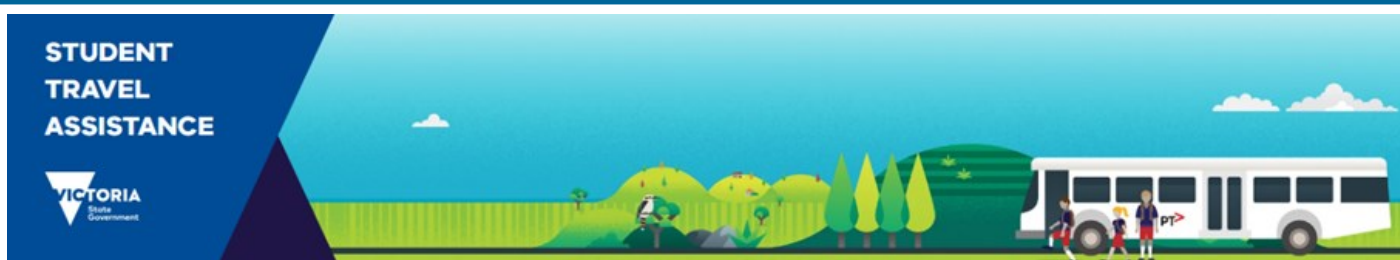
Congratulations to the following students:

President: D'Artagnan Walls

Vice President: Gwen Elliot

Secretary: Hollie Walker

Mrs Prior



COUNTRY BUS TRAVELLERS

With the new bus system now up and running, please register your child to take the country bus or renew your application.

https://studenttravelassistance.educationapps.vic.gov.au/s/?c_tab=home

The new system has slightly changed in the way student applications are done. If they are not an eligible traveller, payment must be made at the time of registering. If you have any queries as to payment and eligibility, please contact the School Bus Management System on 1800 338 663.

If you are having any trouble with registering or renewing applications, please contact Georgia Boag by emailing georgia.boag@education.vic.gov.au or calling 5358 1700.

Year 10 Food Technology

In both classes students have been learning about the standards for food safety in Australia and New Zealand. Students designed a label, that included all of the required information, for lemon butter as a part of their assessment task. They made the lemon butter from scratch, spending 30 minutes stirring it to produce the final product. They will then use it in a slice. Pictured are some of the jars with the labels. The look quite impressive and professional.

Mrs Prior and Mrs Sudholz



IMPORTANT DIARY DATES 2024

11/3/24—Labour Day Public Holiday
16/3/24—Presentation Ball
28/3/24—Last Day Term 1
15/4/24—First Day Term 2
19/4/24—House Athletic Carnival
30/4/24—House Cross Country Carnival



Parent Teacher Student Interviews

Parent/Student/Teacher Interviews shall be held on Wednesday evening, 27th and Thursday 28th March 2024 in three sessions:

Wednesday 27th March 4.30pm – 7.30pm
Thursday 28th March 10.00am – 11.30am
Thursday 28th March 12.00 noon - 1.30pm

Students are not required to attend normal timetable classes on Thursday 27th March but would be expected to attend interviews with their parent/guardian. All sessions will be face to face.

Parents/Guardians will be able to book interviews via the parent portal from Friday 15th March from 4.00pm. Should you need assistance with your log in to the parent portal, please phone our school office on 53581700 and our office staff will be able to assist you.

Please note: the sessions will be held in the Senior Hub, which is the building on the corner of Patrick Street and Hastings Street.

Book of the Week

The Stand In

Author: A.J. Rushby

When new girl Millie shows up at Lena's boarding school, she arrives with a question.

Why is Lena pretending to be someone she's not? Lena ignores her. Until Millie shows her photo after photo of someone who looks like her. EXACTLY LIKE HER. Intrigued, Lena agrees to meet her look-alike, Saskia.

Saskia is wild. And rich. And money is something Lena desperately needs if her mother is to stay in the care home she currently lives in. So when Saskia offers Lena cold, hard cash to stand in for her at family events, Lena finds she can't say no.

Sometimes, she doesn't even want to say no – to the weekends away, the beautiful clothes, the amazing food and Saskia's on-again-off-again boyfriend, Rhys.

Until, of course, she agrees to one last job. The one she definitely should have said no to. Because the job might be the last thing she ever does.

