2015 Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Student Achievement - Community Languages Schools

Congratulations to Akiko Hayashi of Year 7 who was selected to receive a Highly Commended Award as part of the 2015 Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Student Achievement. This is a remarkable achievement and reflects Akiko’s commitment to the study of Japanese.

We Celebrate Respect, Responsibility and Fairness

Naplan
The 2015 NAPLAN results were sent to parents of students in years 7 and 9 last week. The tests provide information about each student’s performance in literacy and numeracy. Overall, the performance of our students in these tests is very positive. As in 2014, the data is trending upwards in year 9 writing and numeracy. A detailed report is provided in this newsletter.

Congratulations Madeline
Congratulations to Madeline Lockhart who won the Southern Highlands Rotary 4 Way+ public speaking competition last week. Maddie was competing with students from Moss Vale High and Frensham and she now proceeds to the next stage. We are very proud of Maddie and wish her all the best.

Leadership projects
At Bowral High School we are committed to the development of a culture of collaborative leadership. A new initiative; BHS Leadership Projects is well underway. The initiative has two main goals:

- Sharing leadership by creating opportunities for staff to ‘step up’ and take on leadership roles.
- Aligning projects to the school strategic directions, targets and milestones supports school improvement and builds a collaborative school culture

Staff has been given the opportunity to apply for funding to lead short term and long term projects that align with school and state priorities. A number of projects will begin in term 4. These include the following:

- Quality Teaching Rounds; this project focuses on improving the classroom practice of teachers, utilising the Quality Teaching model through an evidence-based and research driven methodology. This project will be led by Ms Michelle Ware and Mr Paul Williams.
- Building a website for Year Advisors that will provide up to date information that will assist them in their role. This project will be led by Mr Shane Bleasdale.
- Girls Self Esteem program that aims to empower girls in their early adolescence and improve feelings of confidence and wellbeing. The program focuses on prevention; treatment and support for girls to challenge negative body image and develop higher levels of self-esteem. This project will be led by Ms Lilianna Komljenovic and Ms Polly Karakasch-Hawker.
- The “Kitchen Garden” project will work with the Year 8 Technology class building and maintaining a kitchen garden. The garden will be both economically and environmentally sustainable and supply the Hospitality team with organic produce. This project will be led by Ms Susan Tankard, Ms Liz Crowe and Ms Karen Geer.
- The Bowral High Book Club is a student group that meets weekly to read and discuss books chosen by the students. The club meets in the school counsellor office where the students are supported and encouraged in their reading. This project is led by the school counsellor, Ms Lilianna Komljenovic.

In addition two major long term leadership projects will begin in term 4 and continue into 2016.

Beginning Teachers
The leader of this program will be responsible for managing the Beginning Teacher funding and accounting for its expenditure. The leader will liaise with the teachers who are funded and their mentors and develop a program of support that includes allocated release time, observations, feedback, team teaching, shadowing and a range of professional learning. The leader will develop proformas for recording the support offered to beginning teachers; egg Professional learning plans, meeting records, observation proformas, feedbacks scaffolds, mentor notes etc. The leader will work alongside teachers and mentors to use a range of data to inform teaching and learning. Evidence based teaching and learning are priorities with teachers supported to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices, including sophisticated analysis of student engagement, learning and outcomes. The leader will be chosen in a comprehensive merit selection process that will be finalised at the end of this term.
**VET:**
The VET coordinator manages a very important area of the school curriculum, working alongside the Careers Advisor and head teachers to deliver a curriculum that promotes engagement and real world learning to students. VET is a growing area of the school curriculum. The leader will be chosen in a comprehensive merit selection process that will be finalised at the end of this term.

**Better teachers: Better Beginnings**
The Bowral Community of Schools led by Kim Paviour has been awarded a $40,000 leadership grant for our project: *Better teachers: Better Beginnings.* Our submission was one of 20 projects chosen from 105 submissions.

The funding will be used to create a Community of Practice in the Bowral Community of Schools (COS) that includes the following schools: Bowral Public; Bowral High; Colo Vale Public; Glenquarry Public; The Highlands School; Hill Top Public; Kangaloon Public; Mittagong Public. *Better Beginnings: Better Teachers* will allow our schools to share resources and to employ a highly skilled, experienced mentor teacher 1-2 days a week who will work with all beginning teachers and mentors across the COS, creating a range of opportunities to not only support our beginning teachers but also to build a professional learning community that will benefit all teachers to become better practitioners and interact regularly. The intention is to build strong relationships and collective capacity within and between our schools by supporting beginning teachers to develop their professional teaching identity and enhance professional practice. This will be achieved by providing a coordinated program of professional learning linked to their professional goals; supporting them to successfully achieve and maintain accreditation at the proficient level while at the same time supporting mentor teachers to develop their own leadership capabilities. Challenging beginning teachers to set and maintain high expectations in their classrooms will be achieved through targeted professional learning on curriculum differentiation, use of data to inform practice, explicit teaching practices, effective teacher feedback and rewards, effective classroom management and support of student well-being. Finally, the project will support teacher collaboration by creating mechanisms for sharing best practice and a network that promotes excellence and leadership across schools.

We are now in the process of preparing a role statement for the leader of this project and we hope to advertise and fill the position in term 4 ready. This is a very exciting opportunity for Bowral High School as well as our community of schools. We are committed to supporting and retaining our beginning teachers so that our students are taught well.

**Toilets and Bathrooms**
This week I spoke to the students about the challenges we face in providing and maintaining clean toilet facilities in the school. Through student feedback provided in the *Tell Them from Me* Surveys and student representative groups; we know that the condition of the toilet facilities in the school is of ongoing concern to students. In consultation with students and staff, we have developed a set of strategies to monitor the toilets each day, ensuring that they are clean and soap and paper are available. However, vandalism by one or two students aggravates the whole school community. Over the next few weeks, we have to spend about $20,000 repairing extensive damage in the canteen boys’ toilets. These facilities were only renovated in 2010 but now we have to spend more money on them, diverting funding from critical learning projects such as technology. This situation is extremely frustrating for all concerned.

The SRC will be working closely with the staff to promote responsible, respectful and fair behaviour in the toilets, talking to students on assemblies and reporting to the school executive. Our goal is to address the anti-social behaviours that adversely affect the wellbeing of all students.

It’s not fair and it’s not on!

**Leave**
As of August 28 2015 I will be taking some leave. Nic Morris will be relieving in the Principal position until I return on October 13. Kim Kelly will be relieving DP until the end of the term. Along with John Staats and Linda Langton, I have every confidence in this leadership team. I look forward to my return in Term 4.

Kim Paviour - Principal

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**P&C Fundraising - Entertainment Voucher Book**
From every Entertainment Book and Entertainment Digital Membership we sell, $11 goes towards Bowral High School P&C Association! The more Memberships we sell, the more we raise.

**$55 for a book of vouchers, and you’ll receive over $20,000 worth of valuable offers.**
Order online by clicking on the link to be found on the school website. Payment is online and on presentation of the receipt to the Finance Office, the voucher book will be provided/sent home with your child. Thank you for your support.
**TELL THEM FROM ME : The Partners in Learning parent feedback survey**

As a follow-on from the Student Tell Them From Me Survey conducted in Term 2, Bowral High School will also be participating in the Partners in Learning parent survey. The survey asks parents and carers questions about different factors that are known to impact on student wellbeing and engagement.

Running this survey will help our school understand parents’ and carers’ perspectives on their child’s experience at school. These include: communication between parents/carers and staff, activities and practices at home and parent/carer views on the school's support of learning and behaviour. This valuable feedback will help our school make practical improvements.

The survey is conducted entirely online at home or on public computers. The survey will typically takes 15 minutes or less to complete and is completely confidential. The parent survey will be conducted between 17 August and 16 October. Participating in the survey is entirely voluntary, however, your responses are very much appreciated and help us build an even better school for your children and our students, together.

To access the survey copy and paste this link into your web browser:
https://nsw.tellthemfromme.com/j_acegi_security_check?
j_username=parent16869&j_password=Bow8104

You may also access the survey link via the school webpage at:


Thank you for your participation.

**John Staats - Deputy Principal**

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**Dates for P&C Meetings 2015**

The P&C meet every third Wednesday of the month at the new time of 6.30pm in the Staff Common Room. All parents and interested citizens are warmly invited to come along and be involved in Bowral High School and our students’ education. Here are the dates for meetings this year:

*Monday 14 September, 21 October, 18 November*