From the Principal

Parents, Students, Staff and Community Members;

“A smile is the universal welcome” and wow have I received and given lots of smiles in the last week or so! Thank you everyone for giving me such a smooth transition into this wonderful school community. As Anthony Robbins says, “the only impossible journey is the one you never begin” and I am enjoying every minute of the journey so far and looking forward to working with everyone in a positive and productive way where we put students first and achieve student improvement, in a team environment. I have already experienced the wonderful engagement with learning our students regularly show, seen the passion our staff provide ‘as the teaching team at school’ and met amazing parents who I often refer to as ‘the teaching team at home’. Please remember parents, one of the best advocates for your child is you, and thus it is important that your relationship with school staff reflects this. I operate with an ‘open door policy’ and therefore if required I request parents book a meeting with me to discuss anything that may be required of the school to assist your child. Whilst I don’t have a ‘magic wand’ I am happy to work with you if I am made aware of the situation.

So a little about me – this is my 26th year in education and my 20th year as a Principal. I have worked in a variety of locations from one-teacher schools through to large primary as either a Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal. Each different school has its own unique context, even if they are in the same town or city, and I have experienced remote, rural and city schools and contexts. I am a dad with two grown up sons who are now actively enjoying the workforce in Queensland and the Northern Territory. I am a proud NSW supporter and having spent the first seventeen years of my life growing up in Newcastle also support the Knights – yes it has been a tough footy season with one win for each team!! I also enjoy photography and on my recent trip to the NT was amongst the lucky 1% of tourists who have experienced ‘rain on the Rock’ and let me tell you it was an awesome experience!

Parents Accessing and/or Parking on School Grounds with Vehicles – Please be aware, as shared in previous Newsletters this year, the school cul de sac near the Administration and Tuckshop buildings is a delivery drop off point and location for the government vehicle. I will repeat previous requests to not use this as a drop off zone for students – given the vehicles associated with deliveries, safety is a priority in this area. Please also note that the car park near the Hall is designated for staff only and is also not a drop off zone for parents/students. Parent parking is available on the street and across the road in the public carpark. Your co-operation is anticipated.

It has been lovely to welcome our new students along with their families to our school community over the last week. I’m sure you are already enjoying your time here at North!

I look forward to meeting more parents at Parade on Fridays, which resume again this week.

Cheers
Rod Wood
Principal

Building Foundations + Sustaining Gains = More Opportunities

Congratulations to Gregory McAuliffe, a promising young golfer displaying great talent in his chosen sport. Gregory has just returned from the USA where he was invited by the Amateur Athletic Union to compete in their Junior Olympic Games. Gregory received a bronze medal in the Boys 8 years Division Golf. Gregory completed twenty-seven holes over three days, and his nine hole scores for each day were 50, 41 and 49.
Thank You

I wish to send out a huge thank you to students, parents, grandparents, Chaplaincy volunteers and the staff of all Blackwater schools and childcare providers for the great success of Under Eights Day held last Friday in the park. It was a fantastic morning and I know our staff thought the children had a great experience with all of the different and unusual activities that were provided. Thank you so much for your dedication and commitment to the children in our community.

New Pick up Spot

For those parents who pick their children up from the front of the school near the flag poles, the arrangements have changed. Children will now wait at the new gate that has been installed further down the fence. There is a big shady tree for the children to stand under whilst waiting. It also alleviates the problem of cars stopping at the commencement of the drop off zone instead of travelling all the way through to the end. This will assist in preventing traffic from building up over the crossing as well.

I wish to remind parents that there is no parking in the school grounds. The delivery cul de sac is not a drop off zone for parents or students. Recently, there have been a large number of vehicles driving in this area just on 3 pm or before school. No parents should be driving in this area at all.

Prep Enrolments

Already it is time for us to begin planning for 2017. The Kindy to Prep Transition programme is currently in the planning stages and our staff will be visiting the childcare centres in the very near future. If you have a child that will turn 5 years of age before 30 June 2017, then he/she is eligible for Prep next year. Please collect an enrolment package from the office.

Fete

Our fete is only 30 days away. A number of free dress days are being held on Thursdays leading up to the fete. Teachers have put rosters up on classroom windows for parents to nominate a time to volunteer. We do need every parent in every class to volunteer a small amount of time to ensure our fete is a success. Please ask your class teacher for further ways that they require assistance leading up to the fete or on the day of the fete.

Lastly, I welcome Mr Rod Wood to our school as Principal. Rod is very familiar with our school improvement journey as he has been a long time member of the Blackwater cluster. This has ensured we have had a very smooth and seamless transition. It is business as usual in all classrooms and children are learning important concepts each and every day.

During library lessons we have continued exploring our Book Week books. We will begin our own rating process next week and see if OUR favourites align with the CBCA (Children’s Book Council of Australia) judge’s decision.

To coincide with this, we have been offering library craft activities that tie in with our current favourite books. Last week we made paddle pop puppets from ‘The Cow Tripped over the Moon’, they are now on display in the library. This week’s activity has superseded expectation and has been very, very popular. ‘Piranhas Don’t Eat Bananas’ is a firm favourite among all classes (seniors included), so we have made peg piranhas that can open and close their ‘jaws’. If you come to the library you can also see what these piranhas are really like as we watch and listen to documentary clips about their natural habitat and feeding habits among South American rivers.

We look forward to seeing more students next week to help build ‘Mr Huff’.

Keep an eye out for more information regarding the Book Week dress up day (Week 7) and disco (Week 10).

Best Borrowing Class:
We are so pleased to announce that our Week 4 winners, with an overdue percentage of just 20%, are: 1A and Miss Bolger

I know this class will be super excited to receive their reward on Monday morning.

Semester 1 Best Borrowers:
We missed the announcement in last fortnight’s newsletter so here are the highly contested best borrowers of Terms 1 and 2. These students are very enthusiastic borrowers and it was fabulous to see their little faces light up when they heard how many books they’d borrowed for the semester.

The best borrowers are:

Prep A: Loralei
Prep B: Lucy and Brodie
Prep C: Tobias
   1A: Harry and Amy
   1B: Grace
   1C: Adam
   1/2D: Kieran
   2A: Maddisen
   2B: Savannah
   2/3C: Sarah
   3A: Braithen
   3B: Regan
   4A: Caleise
   4B: Mia, Lily, Lincoln and Kirra
   5A: Zac
   5B: Cheyenne
   5/6C: Alexis
   6B: Max

These fabulous students will now have some serious competition as their class rivals will be hot on their borrowing heels.

On the 18th of July the Prep students celebrated 100 days of learning.

We started our day with the students and teachers coming dressed as if they were 100 years old. We saw many walking sticks, glasses and grey hair all inspired by our grandparents and discussions we had in class. We then took some time to discuss what we might look like when we are 100 years old with each student writing fantastic sentences.

Next, we took to the iPad to turn ourselves into 100 year olds by using an App called the ‘Old Fart Booth’ - this was definitely a highlight for the students, with many parents saying their children looked exactly like their relatives.

Our parents arrived throughout the day to help celebrate our learning, escorting us around to different activities. Some of our activities included 100 day glasses, fruit loop necklaces, fairy bread with 100’s and 1000’s, what we would do with $100 and building a structure with 100 cups. We also included fitness into our day by having to complete 100 exercises throughout the day.

Our day was filled with lots of celebration and it was definitely an excellent way to enjoy the first 100 days of our schooling life! Thank you to all parents, students and teachers who were involved throughout the day.

Christine Bruce
Prep C Teacher
A CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH OUR JAPANESE SISTER CITY VISITORS

On 28th of July we welcomed seven Japanese visitors to our school as part of the Sister City Exchange Programme that Central Highlands Regional Council runs with our sister city in Japan, Ichinoseki every year. The programme sends a group of Blackwater students (Year 10 – 12) to Ichinoseki during June/July holidays and in return, we host the Japanese visitors to Blackwater. It has been my privilege to work with CHRC in assisting the programme as a Japanese native speaker.

This year we welcomed the visitors to 5As and 5Bs Japanese class. Both our students and the visitors were a little shy at first but once they started playing a game they were having so much fun together. 5A played a game of Pictionary and the visitors taught 5B origami. I am proud of our students as they showed their generosity and respect to the visitors. The highlight of the morning was all students eating lunch together and having a chance to play together. It was such a short time to interact but I hope this experience will become a life-long memory for our students.

Yumi Akiyama, Japanese teacher

Blackwater State High School
Junior Secondary

Term 3 has seen staff and students hitting the ground running after an exciting and busy term 2 which welcomed another Year 6 Taster Day in Week 9. Year 6 students from Blackwater and surrounding primary schools took part in several curriculum classes at the high school, showing off their talents in Art, Physical Education and Mathematics. The day was followed by an afternoon tea, information session and a school tour with high school staff for parents/caregivers and students. We are looking forward to the Taster Day and Parent Information session coming up later this term.

It is hard to believe we are already half way through the school year. This is the time when parents/caregivers and students are starting to discuss their preparations for the transition from primary to high school in more detail. To acknowledge and support student’s successes thus far, Blackwater High School is offering a variety of scholarships for students entering into Year 7 for 2017. These scholarships celebrate student success, provide opportunities for leadership in prospective areas such as academics, culture and sport, as well as contributing $600 towards school expenses such as uniforms and textbook hire. Scholarship packages containing the relevant information and criteria will be given to students this week and are also available from the high school. For any questions or queries please contact me via email ljeff55@eq.edu.au or by phone 49869555.

As part of the Blackwater school cluster we love to celebrate and share with our schools and community, the exciting learning opportunities students take part in at Blackwater High. Below we are showing off some of the talents the Year 6 students demonstrated at last terms Taster Day, along with an insight into subjects our Junior Secondary students are studying this term.

Lisa Jefferis
Junior Secondary HOD

This term in year 7 English, our students have immersed themselves into the history and life of the notorious Ned Kelly. The Black Snake is a novel that allows the student to explore the intriguing history of the Australian icon, from multiple points of view, to decide whether he was a hero, a villain, or a victim.
BLACKWATER SCOUT GROUP
Girls & Boys of all ages most welcome

JOEY SCOUTS Age 6—8 years
Monday Nights 4—5pm

CUB SCOUTS Age 8—11 years
Monday Nights 5.30—7 pm

SCOUTS Age 11—15 years
Tuesday Nights 5—7 pm

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