Principal’s Report—May 17th, 2010

Ultranet goes ‘live’ at Somerville Secondary College

On May 17th, 2010 our school will login to the future with Ultranet, the new online system for schools. The Ultranet is a state-wide secure site that teachers, parents/guardians and students can access via the internet. It will be rolled out in our school in two releases:

In Release 1, students and teachers will be able to collaborate using online tools such as wikis, blogs and discussion forums. Students will be able to create their own online learning portfolio and take part in online learning activities. Teachers will be able to access and share valuable online learning content across Victoria.

Release 2, with extra functionality, will be made available to all schools in late September. Towards the end of Term Three, parents/guardians will receive a user name, password and user manual, and from Term Four, you will be able to log on and see information about your child and our school. This information will build up over time, creating an ongoing record for each student. These records will travel with your child from year to year and school to school.

Between now and then, we will give you more information about the system and how you will be able to use it. Our teachers will be learning to use the Ultranet over the next few months and will gradually bring it into the classroom for our students to use. We will inform you when students start to access the Ultranet.

Some basic privacy information about the Ultranet

The Ultranet will not store health or welfare information about your child. (Health or welfare information includes medical, behavioural, birthday or contact details.) In fact, the only personal information about your child in the Ultranet will be their name and school photograph (unless you notify the school and request the photograph is not used). All other information on the Ultranet about your child will be specific to their learning.

In Release 1, learning information about a student can be seen only by that student and teachers at our school. In Term Four, the parents/guardians of the individual student will then be able to see this information. This means that you can only see information about your own children, and teachers can only see information about students at their own school.

If you’d like more information, please go to www.education.vic.gov.au/ultranet or contact the school and ask to talk to one of our Lead Users – myself, Mrs Motteram, Mr Haskett or Ms May.

Athletics Day

On the 5th of May we held our 2nd annual ‘School Athletics Day’. The weather was kind to us, with mostly blue skies and only a couple of light showers. It was fantastic to see the level of involvement of both students and staff in this event. Congratulations to Mrs Owens (Interschool Sports Coordinator) and Ms Nichols (Assistant Interschool Sports Coordinator) on a job well done and a great day.

NAPLAN

Students in Years 7 and 9 completed 5 NAPLAN assessments during this week. The assessments include reading, writing and Mathematics tasks designed to give the school a snapshot of student knowledge in these key areas. NAPLAN Reports will be distributed to parents early in Term 3.

CENTRO/PLAZA ‘Traffic’

I recently spoke at a school assembly reminding students that once they were at school, they were at school for the day, and that walking down to the local shopping areas, either before school or during the school day, was unacceptable. Could parents please remind students about this information and support the school’s position on this matter.

Chris Lloyd
Student leadership profile – Minnie Elliot

Q – Why did you put your hand up for a leadership role in the College?
M – I wanted to have input into how things are done here. I feel it is important to get involved – and a leadership position as a student helps with a resume.”

Q – What are some of the issues or problems that students have come to you with in the hope that you can get something done?
M – A couple of recent issues have been the ban taken off having iPods, soap in the toilets, and the year 7-12 situation. The iPod issue is currently in negotiation.

Q – What do you think is one of our best qualities as a College?
M - I think we are a very tight-knit College. When I walk out into the yard at recess and lunch, I know everyone, students and teachers. I could spend the whole lunch chatting to everyone. The social aspect is very comfortable.

Q – What about bullying?
M – I think there is less of it this year compared to 2009. Cyber bullying is really hard to control. I am sure it happens here and there, but I think things have improved.

Q – What would you like to say about Somerville Secondary College, in one sentence?
M – Somerville Secondary College is a great place to go to school most of the time.

Year 10 Precal Students Knitting Across Generations.

As part of their Intergenerational Community Service Program, students from 10P have been working on the Save the Children Organisation’s ‘Knit One Save One’ Project with residents from Somercare Aged Facility. This project has seen the students working hard with the elderly residents to knit woollen squares to make blankets for children from developing countries. The students and residents have found this a fun and challenging exercise and despite the age gap, conversations over the knitting needles have flowed easily with both groups teaching each other so much. Two students met a resident who was born in the Old Somerville Hospital, now their current home. Stories of Somerville in “the olden days” have been told to our fascinated students who are eager to hear about “their” town.

10P is now calling upon the knitters in our wider school community to take up their needles and create woollen squares for the project. Squares should be approx. 20 centimetres and knitted in plain stitch only. Please leave some additional wool on the square to allow them to be stitched together. All finished squares can be left at the front office and will be accepted with gratitude. More information about the project can be found on the..

Save the Children Website.

BAKED POTATO DAY - Tuesday 18th May

Where: 1C
Time: Lunchtime

$2.50 (plain potato with butter and cheese)
$3.00 (potato with butter, cheese, coleslaw and sour cream)

Sorry no credit
What’s Cooking in Food Technology?

Master Chefs in International Cuisine:

At present students in the Year 10 elective are investigating Bush Tucker foods. As part of the Australian Fare work unit, the design brief required the class to create their own “Aussie pie”. They choose from a wide selection of ingredients and explored their ideas to produce delicious gourmet delights.

Josh Wall presents his own Indian Curry Kangaroo Pie.

International Cuisine - Tourism & Travel Excursion

On Tuesday 27th April, Ms White’s ‘Tourism & Travel’ and Ms Beggs’ ‘International Cuisine’ classes went on an excursion to four different places.

Firstly we went to a gingerbread factory. We got a guided tour around the kitchens and learned how gingerbread is made. When our tour finished, we got to decorate our own gingerbread men.

After that we travelled to Ashcombe Maze and when we got there we were allowed some free time with our friends to look around the maze and have lunch at the café. Then we had to get back on the bus and went to Montalto Vineyard. Our tour guide gave us some information about the place and we looked at the sculptures they had on display for a competition. We had to vote for the sculpture we liked the best.

Lastly we went to Sunny Ridge Strawberry Farm. When we got there we had to tie plastic bags around our shoes so they wouldn’t get muddy. Then we went out to the fields to pick strawberries. Afterwards the owners gave us homemade strawberry ice cream. After a big AWESOME day we went back to school and then home. Overall it was fun and we all learned a lot!

Taylor & Brittany
A big Athletics Day Thank You to:

Nando’s Somerville
Bakers Delight Somerville
Coolart Country Smokehouse, Somerville Plaza

Your generosity helped make our Athletics Carnival a success!
I spent my work experience week at Blissmedia, a web design company located in Docklands. Their office was on the 7th floor of the Life Lab building, and has a spectacular view across the Bay to the Bolte Bridge. I was supervised by the managing director Mr Phong and was given a seat near the window so I could admire the view. Because my work place was so far away my parents let me use trains and trams to commute, at times a rather hectic and cramped experience but I also had a lot of fun not having to rely on others to get me where I needed to go.

Mr Phong asked me to bring my laptop with me because they were short on computers, and after he helped set me up next to Satoshi and inquiring into what I knew about design and web design, he decided he would teach me how to design and build my own website. After I designed a logo and index page (home page) using Gimp 2—a free program similar to Photoshop, which we use at school—Mr Phong explained that a website is constructed using html code. Because I’d never used html before, and didn’t really know much about how tagging language is used. I was able to construct a more sophisticated index page. It has a working navigation bar, fields where you can type in text, and a picture of some awesome friends!

Mr Phong showed me some online tutorials to look through. After learning some basic html tagging—which lets you classify text as headings, links, paragraphs and various other things, and also lets you add page elements such as images and tables—I was able to construct a simple looking web page.

My page was a little clumsy and lacked a few common features of professional web pages such as a navigation bar, but it stuck fairly closely to my original design. Mr Phong was impressed with how fast I’d picked up the html ‘language’, so he set me to work learning Class Style Sheets, more commonly known as CSS. CSS lets you set styles for your html tags, so if you say that a paragraph tag will have yellow text and the font will be Arial Bold in the CSS, whenever you tag a block of text as a paragraph it will automatically use these settings. Using this new knowledge and some more advanced tagging language I was able to construct a more sophisticated index page. It has a working navigation bar, fields where you can type in text, and a picture of some awesome friends! My workplace was filled with really friendly people, I learnt some really useful things and had a great time while I was at it, if I could I’d definitely go on another Work Experience Week.

Ceramics Gallery

Sara Clarke - Yr 9
Decorative platter
Ceramics Elective

Crystal Strongman - Yr 10
Teapot -
Ceramics elective
Parents Victoria Online Conference

*From 6am Sunday 16 May to midnight on Saturday 22 May 2010

* School leaders and teachers are invited to inform parents of this no-cost opportunity for discussion and debate.

ALL PARENTS OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN (in Victoria, all other Australian States and Territories and schools in international locations) are warmly invited to take part in the fourth annual online conference to be held by Parents Victoria. The conference will be held non-stop on the internet during Education Week (6am Sunday 16 May to midnight Saturday 22 May). No special software is needed just an internet-connected computer and a browser. The online discussions are very easy to join in, and guidelines about how to participate will be provided. The conference is proudly sponsored by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Join in for all days, just some days, or even a few hours, depending on your lifestyle and other commitments.

Register Online at No Cost

To participate you first need to register yourself online at http://www.cybertext.net.au/pv1_10/pv2010registration.php
You will receive an email confirming your registration.
If you have registered, at conference opening time, you will be sent an email letting you know the actual conference website address. No passwords or users names will be necessary.

The conference will feature seven ‘live’ daily online discussions, each of them hosted, for several hours each day, by a member of Parents Victoria and/or experts in the topic, e.g. DEECD, KGFYL. Each 24-hour period will focus on a topic that is currently of concern or interest to parents. An online ‘resource bundle’ of information and opinions will also be provided as an optional extra to give you a kick-start on each day’s topic.

Online Conference Topics

The conference will discuss the following topical issues. Online discussions will take place on the conference website between 6am and 12 midnight daily. However, each day, several sessions will feature special hosts. Hosted times will be available on the conference website.

SUNDAY 16 MAY
Transition - What could be done to improve transition from one level of schooling to the next, i.e. kindergarten to primary, year 6 to secondary? Do you as a parent know how you can be involved at each level?

MONDAY 17 MAY
Bullying & Discipline - Are we making any progress in successfully dealing with bullying in schools? In general, what are the most effective ways of achieving appropriate behaviour?

TUESDAY 18 MAY
Regeneration in Victorian Government Schools – A regeneration project is designed to enhance the education provision in a local area. It may mean the amalgamation of schools, the relocation of early childhood/community facilities on to one site or the transformation of curriculum programs and pathways. For many parents this has been an issue of great concern. Discuss with us your thoughts and experiences.

WEDNESDAY 19 MAY
Food & Schools – How do you feel about the timing of meal breaks? Is there a place for junk food in school canteens? What about party food, chocolate drives, and so on.

THURSDAY 20 MAY
Disability – Are schools supportive and inclusive of children with disabilities? What more could be done?

FRIDAY 21 MAY
School Costs - What do parents need to pay for?

SATURDAY 22 MAY
Party Safe - As a parent, do you know your responsibilities when hosting under-age parties? Do you have some good advice or warnings for other parents?
WEEK-LONG ONLINE DISCUSSION
There will also be one continuous week-long online discussion - My School – What information do parents really want to know about their child’s school? This discussion will also have the option of starting new threads if you have an issue you would like to discuss.

Prizes for Participation

Schools with the greatest number of individual participants will be in the running to win great prizes. To be eligible, participants must be correctly registered and leave at least one comment on the discussion boards.

An interactive whiteboard will be won by the Parents Victoria member school that has the greatest number of individual participants over the entire conference.

- A complimentary year’s membership to Parents Victoria will be awarded to the eligible non-member Victorian school that has the greatest number of individual participants over the entire conference.

In addition, one of three netbooks will be won by:

- the member school with the most correctly registered individual participants who comment on the week-long question
- the Victorian school with the most correctly registered individual participants who comment on the question regarding Bullying and Discipline
- the member school with the most correctly registered individual participants who leave comments on the daily questions on either Sunday 16 May or Saturday 22 May.

*Member schools are defined as schools whose 2010 membership payment has been received by 14th May 2010. Membership information can be obtained by phone (03) 93802158 or email office@parentsvictoria.asn.au. Schools are only eligible to win one prize. In the event that a school wins more than one category, the prize in subsequent categories will go to the school with the next highest number of eligible participants.

The Parents Victoria Online Conference 2010 website will open from 6am on 16 May at: http://www.cybertext.net.au/pv/ We look forward to meeting with you online to discuss issues of importance for your children. The more of you who join in, the more successful this e-vent will be. For further information and updates, visit the Parents Victoria website at: www.parentsvictoria.asn.au, email us at: office@parentsvictoria.asn.au or phone (03) 9380 2158.

You are also most welcome to contact the Online Conference Manager, Ms Debra Brydon, at: brydon@cybertext.net.au or 0413 009988.

Best wishes,
Parents Victoria Executive Team
‘Our Children, Our Concern’

Ceramics Gallery

Chloe Barker - Yr8
Fish Dish
Ceramics

Arion Sands Yr 9
Decorative Platter
Yr 9 Ceramics Elective
The MCG Tour was a fabulous experience enjoyed by Year Nine sports enthusiasts. A group of 30 students attended the excursion. They were very fortunate to have an excellent tour guide who also praised the students for their interest shown and good behaviour on the day. The tour included the MCG facilities, the ‘Hallowed Turf’, the National Sports Museum and the highlight was participating in the interactive ‘Game on Experience’, a walk from the G to Federation Square for lunch finished off a perfect day!

City Week Snippet

Ceramics Gallery

Petra Van Staden—Yr 10
Decorative platter
Yr 10 Ceramics elective

Nirissa Tanner Yr 9
Teapot
Ceramics elective