Principal’s Report—16th December 2011

Student Learning Devices

Thank you to the 50 parents (and a similar number of students) who attended our most recent 1:1 SLD Program Information Evening. As promised, the first 20 students who completed the process were issued with a new 1830T netbook computer. Due to flooding in Thailand there will be a delay until early February 2012 in deliveries of new netbooks but I expect that all Year 10 students will be part of the program in the first couple of weeks of Term 1, 2012. Late last week an additional amount of funding was received by the school in recognition of increased student numbers at relevant year levels. I would like to acknowledge and thank our local MP, Neale Burgess for his persistence with making sure that students at Somerville Secondary College were given a fair go under the NSSCF program. A meeting will be conducted in the week of February 6, 2012 for parents (and students) in Years 7 to 9 where the details of the co-contribution netbook SLD program will be explained. I apologize for delaying this meeting but due to the inability to access netbook computer hardware until late January 2012 I decided to move the proposed meeting into the 2012 calendar year.

Schools Access Monash (SAM)

Congratulations to Meaghan Dickens, Tesharnie Gruar, Brittany Melville, Chloe Whitbourne, Hannah Agnew-Elliott, Carly Melville, Maddy Mooney, Vicki Jacgung, Luke Millard and Sarah Horstra who have recently been accepted into the Monash Gateway Scholars Program. As part of this program students will receive ongoing mentoring and support from Monash (including financial) with a view to these students eventually accessing courses at a university level. This is yet another aspect of the benefits to our students of the SAM program which will include students in Year 8 as of 2012.

VCAL Partnership

At our last meeting of the steering group for the Somerville Secondary College Wetlands Project, Leighton Contractors confirmed that in addition to the provision of personnel to work with students they would also be committing $20,000 to the project. Earlier this week Catherine Arnold (VCAL Coordinator) and I met with Alan Wilson and Phil Lowe from Inghams Enterprises who also confirmed that they would commit $20,000 over two years to the project and supply personnel to work with our VCAL students. Inghams have expressed an interest in working more closely with the school in a number of ways including supporting apprenticeships where possible. A very positive meeting with great outcomes for the school – and another thank you to Neale Burgess for his support in arranging the meeting and encouraging Inghams to become more involved with VCAL and the school in general.

(Continued on page 2)
Farewells and Acknowledgements

As of the end of 2011 there will be a significant number of staff departing the college (mostly to retire) and I would like to acknowledge their contribution to the school and its students. Most significantly, Assistant Principal Danny McManus will retire at the end of the summer break after having been a stalwart of the Principal class at the college. Danny’s contributions to the college are too many and too diverse to do justice to here, but suffice to say that his sense of humour, his work ethic and his passion for working with students will be greatly missed by all. Mr Jamie Robertson will join the college in the role of Assistant Principal as of January 23\textsuperscript{rd}, 2012 and I look forward to an equally outstanding contribution from Jamie in this role. There is no doubt that Danny will be a hard act to follow.

After retiring once already and then returning to support our students in the Year 7 & 8 Literacy and Numeracy Program, Dawn Tapscott will retire again at the end of 2011. This time Dawn has assured me that she is really retiring (except perhaps for a stint as a member of the Visiting Teacher Service during the first half of 2012). Any student who has been lucky enough to have Dawn as a teacher (and there are many) knows what a contribution she has made to the college and to education across both the primary and secondary sectors. I wish Dawn well in her retirement and hope that she stays in contact with the college.

Jayne Potts joined the college this year working in our Year 7 & 8 Literacy & Numeracy Program and she has made a genuine difference with all of the students that she has taught and supported. Jayne is an excellent teacher, a fact that can be attested to by any of her students, who has contributed a great deal to the college during the last year and I wish her well for the future.

Maureen Campisi has been so much more than an outstanding Integration Aide to the college over the last few years – becoming an integral member of the staff and a key figure in areas such as OHS and staff morale. Maureen has worked with a large number of students who will greatly miss her care and support. Maureen will not be lost to the students of Victoria as she will be supporting students in Traralgon as of the start of 2012. I wish Maureen the best in her role at her new school and I am sure she will soon become an integral part of Latrobe SDS as she did at Somerville Secondary College.

We have been truly fortunate to have had Widya Widyasari as our language assistant since the beginning of Term 2 this year. Widya has been a fantastic support to the students (and our staff) in Indonesian classes both at Somerville Secondary College and at some of our feeder primary schools. Widya’s quiet professionalism and genuine caring nature will be missed by our staff and our students. I wish Widya well for the future as she returns to her home in Indonesia.

Final Words for 2011

I would like to acknowledge and thank all members of the Somerville Secondary College community who have supported our school and our students this year and I wish you all a safe and relaxing Christmas break. I look forward to our inaugural Year 12 program in 2012 (only 51 sleeps).

Chris Lloyd
A scan through this year’s college magazine will reveal to the reader that at the end of this term I get to retire! I have often commented that when I retire I will sit down and write a book about the half a zillion things that have passed across my desk in the time that I have been in education, some a little serious, some less so. Recently I was looking at a website that some wag had put together – about school newsletters and the fact that despite best attempts to proofread out the errors they still do occur – I thought at least a couple of these would bring a smile to your face – like this one from a country school newsletter obviously very proud of their student achievement!

Or this from a local primary school’s very proud Grade One teacher with an article headed...

“OUR STUDENTS MAKE BEAUTIFUL WALL HANGINGS”

So why am I speaking of newsletters? Well, as an old newsman, Mark Twain could understand the inherent difficulties of producing error-free writing. Twain wrote

“And then there is that other thing: when you think you are reading proof, whereas you are merely reading your own mind; your statement of the thing is full of holes & vacancies but you don’t know it, because you are filling them from your mind as you go along…”

What of course Twain was saying is that the art of proofreading is not as easy as it appears – because you read what you think is on the page rather than read what is actually on the page – unless you are one of my erstwhile colleagues in Lynn Motteram or Chris Lloyd. Sue Curran is our newsletter reporter; compiler, printer and these two are our proofreaders. So carefully scan these pages and see how many errors you can detect in print – I am sure you will find, err none. Lynn reminds me of the wise owl in the “Little Grey Rabbit”.

Little passes her gaze as she, with some delight I might add, seeks out the errors of the authors and ensures that the newsletters you receive each fortnight are free of bothersome words and equally bothersome errors. So in this final newsletter, thank you to those who create and proof your newsletter and to you the reader, thank you for taking the time to be interested in your child. From all of the Principal class team we wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas and wish you all the best over the holiday period.

Danny McManus

...Farewell and Thank You

I know I speak on behalf of our staff, students and parents when I wish Danny a happy and fulfilling retirement. It is hard to imagine our school without Danny in it because he has been such a reliable and constant presence.

From a personal perspective, I know I will miss him for a lot of reasons. We share not only a common role as Assistant Principals, but a shared purpose and aspirations for all the students and staff we interact with every day. I have been so fortunate to have had the opportunity to benefit from his experience and generosity in sharing his knowledge. More importantly we have developed a working relationship of mutual trust and respect.

So, farewell Danny and thank you for all that you have worked to achieve for our staff, the students and their parents.

From me, I thank you Danny for simply always being there.

Lynn Motteram
Signal is Melbourne’s first Arts Studio dedicated to young people aged 13 to 20, interested in a wide range of art forms. Prominently located on the Yarra River’s North Bank, Signal is equipped with multi-purpose workshop, gallery and performance spaces, an outdoor plaza, projective windows for screen-based artworks, and an 18-speaker sound wall.

The race is on for free tickets to the sold out BIG DAY OUT 2011! Dash to Defy is a race that happens every Tuesday and Thursday in Melbourne throughout December... All you need to do is find 'Barry' the keeper of the ticket - he will be in different locations in Melbourne, and to find out where, register at www.dashtodefy.com.au to receive your clues to his whereabouts.

Check out the Mornington Peninsula Youth Services Holiday Program

Sanctuary and Zoo:
- Healesville Sanctuary - specialising in native Australian animals.
- Melbourne Aquarium - showcasing the creatures of the Southern Ocean.
- Melbourne Zoo - more than 350 animal species.
- Werribee Open Range Zoo - Australian and African animals.

Museum:
- Fire Museum - Melbourne
- Fox Classic Car Collection - Melbourne
- Geelong Naval and Maritime Museum - Geelong
- Gold Treasury Museum - Melbourne
- Melbourne Museum - Carlton
- Scienceworks Museum - Spotswood

Opens Boxing day - Frankston Beach

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Frankston Waterfront Festival 2012

Opens Saturday 14th January
On the evening of Thursday 15th December, our College acknowledged and celebrated the achievements and successes of our students. The performances were full of energy and very entertaining (including getting grabbed and pushed by the dancers - a very ‘interactive dance number)! It was wonderful to see so many parents at Awards Night, we are as proud of our students as you are!
Whooping cough on the rise in 5 - 14 year olds

The number of children aged 5-14 years old catching whooping cough has increased dramatically in Victoria over the last four years.

Whooping cough, also known as Pertussis, is a highly infectious disease causing a severe, persistent cough. Whooping cough is spread by coughs and sneezes from an infected person.

While most children and adults eventually recover, often after weeks or months of illness and household disruption, there is a serious risk if infected people pass the disease to young babies.

Around one in every 200 babies under six months of age who catch whooping cough will die. Some babies will suffer permanent disability from brain and lung damage.

Family members, including siblings and parents, are the main source of whooping cough infection in babies.

Timely immunisation offers the best chance of preventing the spread of whooping cough. Whooping cough vaccine is provided free for children at two, four and six months, at their fourth birthday, adolescents in Year 10 of secondary school and parents of newborn babies. The two month vaccine can be given early at six weeks to start protection earlier.

Parents are urged to ensure their children are vaccinated on time and to consider their own whooping cough vaccination needs. Vaccination is recommended for all adults caring for or working with young children, including school teachers, as well as all health care workers.

Parents should talk to their doctor or nurse if they have questions about the whooping cough vaccine.

For more information search ‘whooping cough’ on www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

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Safe Schools Coalition Victoria – Member

Somerville Secondary College

This certificate recognises Somerville Secondary College’s commitment to supporting sexual and gender diversity, including tackling homophobic discrimination and supporting same sex attracted and gender questioning students.

Safe Schools Coalition Victoria is a coalition of schools and individuals dedicated to creating safer educational environments. Our aim is that schools in Victoria are places where same sex attracted and gender questioning young people are supported, where every family can belong, where every teacher can teach and every student can learn.

[Signature]

Director – Safe Schools Coalition Victoria

November 2011

Somerville Secondary College recently became a member of Safe Schools Coalition Victoria (SSCV) who are an association of schools and individuals dedicated to creating safer educational environments. Somerville Secondary College values the importance of providing a safe place for students, teachers, parents and other people in the community. SSCV is a partnership between Rainbow Network Victoria and the Foundation for Youth Australians (FYA). The role of SSCV is to tackle and reduce homophobia, transphobia and heterosexism within school communities. For more information, check out http://safeschoolcoalitionvictoria.org.au.
On Wednesday the 30th of November the Year Eleven VCAL class went to the Operation Christmas Child factory in Mitcham. Operation Christmas Child is an organisation that started in 1993 by Samaritan’s Purse. Every year generous people from across the world pack shoe boxes with simple, loving gifts. They ask for something to play with, something to learn with, something to love, something for hygiene and something to wear.

During the day our job was to go through all the shoe boxes to make sure they met the requirements and to make sure they didn’t have any items that are prohibited. These items include, food, second hand items, liquid items, war toys, anything scary, any items with a skull or crossbones on it, fragile items, dolls that are dressed inappropriately, religious items and any racial items.

Helping out at the Operation Christmas Child factory has changed my outlook on the way I look at money, and things I want. It taught me not to be greedy because many people around the world wouldn’t get a chance to have most of the things we have and live in poor conditions. This was a fantastic introduction to our year as Intermediate VCAL Students.

by Jayden
As part of Year 8 English, students were required to present an ‘Expert Wall’ on the books they had read throughout Term Four. The Expert Wall contained predictions of what they thought would happen in their story. They also made clarifications of unknown words, questions that were raised while reading and summaries. The groups also made recommendations of who should read the book and how much they enjoyed it. The students then put this all together in a presentation to each other and some staff members. The Year 8s did a wonderful job and really showed how much they had learnt this year in reading.
Somerville Secondary College completed another year of the MAT (Martial Arts Therapy) Program. The program was a great opportunity for the students to learn the skills of working as a team & being able to teach other students at Somerville Rise Primary School the techniques they had learnt in the program. Thank you to all the students who participated & congratulations on completing the program.

Art Gallery - Year 8 & 9 Ceramics

[Images of ceramic artworks]
The Resource Centre has hosted the ‘Get Connected’ craft lunchtimes every Monday and the sessions have been very well attended! Students enjoy many crafts and nibbles - they are happy to carry on with their projects every week, chatting and connecting with each other. The main attraction is a pint-sized Pomeranian pooch named Gaby. She sits in her little basket sporting a perky little bow in her hair and graciously accepts all the pats, hugs and affection from our regular craft crew! Gaby is by no means a puppy, but seems to thrive on the love she gets from the students!
**Community Announcements & Advertisements**

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**Calling All Girls**

Casey Comets wish to invite all girls aged 5 years and up to Come and Play Soccer!

We are holding our first registration/open day on December 1st between 2pm and 5pm at our grounds located in U2, U14, 216 and U8 for season 2012.

Casey Comets soccer club for the first time is now recruiting for the following junior age groups:

- U12, U14, 216 and U8 for season 2012.

Casey Comets senior women play in the women’s Premier League and our U15 team will be seeking a new coach for the 2012 season.

Our senior girls games are televised live on Channel 7 and are regularly covered in the local media. Our Metropolitan girls team won the league along with our U15’s girl who also played in the state final and finished runners up.

Casey Comets is the only women’s Premier league team in the southern region and has a proud history of producing talented footballers for women’s and girls’ games. Our women’s players have had the opportunity to play for Melbourne Victory.

Casey Comets would like to develop an elite pathway and future for all our junior girls to have an opportunity to play the highest level.

Our coaches at Casey Comets are extremely passionate and hold an “Asian football Confederation” license and have played the game at the highest level.

Our facilities are one of the best in the region and with an upgrade in lighting on our main pitch for night games and another new first class pitches to be established to assist with our growth.

For More Information Please Contact: Chris McConachie - Junior President 04133 608 133

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**2011 Yearbook Order Form**

If you would like to purchase the Somerville Secondary College 2011 Yearbook for $20, simply fill out the details below and return it to the Administration Office with your payment.

Student’s Name: _______________________________
Form Group: __________________ How many. Required □

Payment Accepted:  Cash □ Credit Card □

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Cardholder Name: _______________________________

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Community Announcements & Advertisements

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