



MERBEIN SECONDARY COLLEGE

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Newsletter No. 13

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Coming Events.....

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| 19/5 | SSSSA Cross Country |
| 20/5 | Year 9 VRAP Melbourne trip (20 th – 22 nd May) |
| 2/6 | Year 7 Camp (2 nd – 5 th June) |

Term Dates for 2009

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|----------|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Term 2 - | 20 th April | - | 26 th June |
| Term 3 - | 13 th July | - | 18 th September |
| Term 4 - | 5 th October | - | 18 th December |

....FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

School Reorganisation Goes Ahead

At a meeting yesterday morning with Ron Lake, Regional Director, Vince Dobbs, our Regional Network Leader, cluster principals and school council presidents it was the strong view of all present that the proposed merger goes ahead with the three schools (Merbein Secondary College, Merbein Primary School and Merbein South Primary School) that voted in support of the reorganisation. Mr Lake indicated that he will be recommending this to the Minister. There was much excitement and anticipation about a new school and how the students will benefit from the new facilities that will support and enhance the teaching and learning process. With the Minister's approval the new school will be built next year.

Discussions around this proposal have been very robust and indeed challenging in some of the local school communities.

It is also important to recognise that a significant number of our students come from primary schools other than Merbein and Merbein South. The new school will continue to have a very strong and caring transition program for students who enter in Year 7. We continue to look forward to having students from all of the other feeder primary schools commencing their secondary education with us.

Open Night

The school will conduct an Open Night on Tuesday 26th May between 5:00pm and 7:00pm. The main purpose of the evening is to provide an opportunity for Grade 6 students and their parents to inspect our facilities and meet with staff and other parents. The night will feature displays of student work and also students in action in subjects such as Music, Home Economics, Science and Computer Technology. Those students required to assist on this evening will be advised in writing.

Grade 6 Visits

Discovery Days for Grade 6 students will not occur this year due to the DEECD restriction on pupil free days and year levels remaining home. Instead Grade 6 students zoned to Merbein Secondary College will visit

our school on Friday 22nd May between 9:30am and 11:30am. These students will tour the school and gain an insight into being in a secondary school setting. They will also be having recess at school.

We are looking forward to hosting Grade 6 students from Our Lady's on Thursday 4th June between 10:00am and 12:30pm

ROCK EISTEDDFOD

On Sunday May 24th Gerard Veltre will be coming to Merbein Secondary College to work with the students on the dance sequences already learnt and to teach new sections of dance sequences.

All students will be required for rehearsal on the Sunday afternoon. The times for the rehearsal will be notified as soon as these can be confirmed with Gerard. These will depend on his flight arrangements to Mildura.

On Tuesday 26th May the school has an open evening, where Grade 6 families come into our school. It is proposed to use this time for another rehearsal opportunity between 5 and 7pm.

SPORTING NEWS

Interschool Cross Country

Will be held on Tuesday 19th May at Apex Park. The races are at the following times:

10:00am – 16 yrs Girls

10:30am – 16 yrs Boys

11:15am – 15 yrs Boys and Girls

11:45am – 14 yrs Boys and Girls

12:15pm – 13 yrs Boys and Girls

Parents are encouraged to attend and support our runners.

...Miss Priest

INTRODUCING VINCENT REIF EXCHANGE STUDENT

I'm Vincent Reif and I'm currently attending Year 10 of Merbein Secondary College as an exchange student. I have been a student of this college for more than 3 months already and I'll leave the school and country on the 28th of June.

There are several reasons why I decided to go on exchange and therefore leaving my family and friends back home in Austria:

A few years ago my family was chosen to be the host family of an Australian exchange student over a period of half a year. Hosting an exchange student ourselves probably started me off thinking about the whole idea of doing an exchange.

What gave me the confidence to take the step of enrolling in the exchange in the end was probably my

sister's very positive feedback about her exchange in France and the great support of my Austrian school.

Besides improving my English skills, as well as exploring a totally different country and culture, another reason for going on exchange was probably the fact that I was inspired by a lot of my friends. To be precise, as my Austrian school is really keen on sending its students overseas, 12 of my friends are on exchange at the moment, too.

I guess those are the most important reasons why I finally decided spending half a year Down Under

As I just mentioned my Austrian school, I might now use this opportunity to point out the major differences between my Austrian school and Merbein. In Austria I'm attending an economy based school which is run from Year 9 to Year 13. My school places great emphasis on foreign languages, presentation skills, coaching classes as well as economy based subjects. To ensure highest possible communication skills all classes are taught mainly in English. Besides English, French and Spanish lessons are provided, too. At the end of Year 13 we have to sit our abitur successfully. Working language half English half French.

Other major differences in terms of school are the large number and diversity of subjects. As an Austrian Year 10 student you have got 16 compulsory subjects. The classes reach from serving, coaching, business administration and accounting to religion, information technology and foreign languages. To fit all those classes into one school day, school starts at 8 o'clock and ends between 12:30 and 18:00 o'clock, depending on the weekday.

In about 13 subjects the students have to write smaller test on a regular basis throughout the semester leading all up to one big test each semester, covering basically the whole material taught in class. Regular assignments, projects, presentations and oral tests aren't an unusual thing in most subjects either. Therefore, to pass the year as a totally average student like me, you are advised to study at least 1, up to 3 hours a day.

But as I just told you, being a very average Austrian student, having difficulties finishing up work and passing tests sometimes I need things which divert me from the hard school work. Playing the guitar and saxophone, jogging and attending a Tae-Kwon-Do course are one way to relax.

Going out with friends is another one. Therefore it's really good to be in the lucky situation as to live in a small country town close to Vienna, the capital city of Austria. As something going on all the time around my village and in Vienna of course, a normal Friday and Saturday night would last until 3 o'clock a.m.

But as school work has to be done on the weekends, too, it's on you to organise your time yourself.

In Australia I'm currently part of the Wilson family, therefore having 3 host sisters and one host brother. As my two older host sisters have moved out already and my youngest host sister Phoebe is on exchange in Austria at the moment, Jack's the only kid left in the family. The Wilsons are a really nice but also very sporty family, trying to convince me doing more sport.

But they don't only involve me in family activities like playing sports but they're also trying to show me as many different places as possible, is it around Mildura or the whole eastern part of the country. Making all those different experience together has made me become a family member within the last 3 ½ months.

To be honest I've had a really good time in Australia so far so it's kind of challenging summarising it to a bit less than 2 pages.

But if you want to know of which good experiences I'm talking about, the best way is probably to go on an exchange yourself. It's just an awesome experience.



Mr Garry Costello
PRINCIPAL