



MARGARET RIVER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

10th February 2017

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tues 21 Feb - Year 11 Biology Zoo visit
Thurs 23 Feb - Year 12 Parent Information Night
Fri 24 Feb - Faction Swimming Carnival
Fri 24 Feb - Year 12 School Ball
Tues 28 Feb - Parent Meet and Greet

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

It is great to be back at school, especially after having a six month break. During my absence, MRSHS was expertly lead by Mr Rob Nail as acting Principal and I wish to thank him for his magnificent contributions in 2016.

The beginning of each new school year opens a new chapter and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all students, parents and staff to Margaret River Senior High School for 2017. In particular,



I welcome students who are new to Margaret River Senior High School, particularly the 205 Year 7 students and the 37 new students who are attending our high school for the first time. We thank you for choosing our school and hope that your time with us will be both productive and rewarding.

This year we welcome twelve new staff to accommodate the increased enrolments. All new staff have been specifically selected to teach at Margaret River SHS. We would like to welcome:

English - Nakita Kitson and Sam Kettlewell
Mathematics - Sue Leith
HASS - Alex Temby and Florina Geroff
Science - Matthew Johnston, Sinaed Corr and Bettina Pretsel
Phys Ed - Genevieve Berry
VET - Emma Dziadulewicz

We have had an excellent start to our school year with students and teachers returning after their holiday break invigorated and keen to get to work. The start to the school year has been extremely smooth and it is exciting to see many new enrolments which has resulted in our numbers increasing to 1008 for 2017. It was particularly pleasing to note the high level of compliance with our dress code at our first assembly; I thank students and parents for their assistance in this matter. A reminder that the school uniform is compulsory and has been endorsed by the Margaret River Senior High School Board.

I would like to congratulate and acknowledge the outstanding achievements of our 2016 Year 12 cohort. Our ATAR students were ranked 18th in the state with a median ATAR (rank to get them into university) of 86.4. These results were achieved through hard work and determination throughout their time at MRSHS and I am very proud that their efforts have resulted in MRSHS being the highest performing rural high school in the state. This is a massive achievement for our community.

Our Vocational Education Training (VET) students were also extremely successful in their endeavours with over 90% of these students achieving a Certificate II or higher in their final year.

I would like to thank the staff who worked with these students over the five years that they attended our school, assisting them to achieving these outstanding results. It is also very important to acknowledge the terrific support we received from parents and the community in providing a wide range of opportunities to these students.

Attendance

From the beginning of 2016, MRSHS has had a clear focus on improving our attendance rates. The number of students with regular attendance (90% attendance and above) in 2016 for Margaret River Senior High School was 79%. This is a significant improvement from past years and provides students with the best possible opportunity of achieving success. It is our school practice to record all vacations taking place during school time as 'unauthorised absences'. Whilst I understand that work commitments and schedules affect when families can

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Principal's Address Continued...

take holidays, students missing school during these times is having a significant impact on their progress. I encourage parents to think carefully when planning holidays and take into account the impact on their children's education. Work will not be provided for students who are taking holidays and assessments that are missed may not be able to be rescheduled, thus effecting student's overall grades. This is particularly pertinent for students who have cumulative assessments in Year 11 and 12. Work will be provided for students who are on Australian or State representation, long term illness or exceptional circumstances that are approved by the Principal.

Student attendance rates will be a key factor in the School's Good Standing Policy, which will determine which students attend events such as end of year reward excursions.

In 2017, we again have a clear focus on providing students with relevant homework that is aimed to assist with completion of school courses and provide extension for high performing students. Parents are encouraged to assist by checking student diaries and helping set good study and homework routines at home. The school's Homework Policy can be viewed in detail on the school's Website in the 'About Us' section under School Policies: www.margaretrivershs.wa.edu.au.

Andrew Host
Principal

Future Building Program at MRSHS

In November last year it was announced that a \$30 million building upgrade had been provided for Margaret River Senior High School. This was designed as the first stage of upgrades to the building facilities at MRSHS to cater for our rapid increase in numbers and to provide state of the art facilities to ensure the highest quality education for our students. This is an exciting opportunity for our school.

The first stage of development will result in the school receiving a new Science Centre, a Gymnasium, a double storey 16 classroom block and extension to the existing Administration and Students Services Blocks. Further to this two tennis courts will be relocated, additional parking provided and minor work on the realignment of the existing playing fields. These facilities will enable the school to cater for our projected student numbers of 1200 by 2020. Our numbers are projected to rise and this will require additional facilities into the future. The architects "Donald and Warn" have been appointed and will commence work with the Project Control Group (PCG), in early 2017.

There has been recent community debate surrounding the future of the Organic Garden which is located on MRSHS land to the south of our existing car parks. The arrangement that the school has undertaken with the Organic Garden has always been on a temporary basis. In 1988 a five year lease with a five year option was provided to the Organic Gardeners. Since the end of this lease period, the Organic Gardeners have signed a yearly Hire of Facilities arrangement, the same as other community groups that access facilities at MRSHS, and have been welcome guests of the school. It has been clearly indicated to the Organic Gardeners that Stage 1 buildings, including the Gymnasium will not be located on the garden.

The placement of future facilities on the Margaret River Senior High School site will be determined by what is in the best educational interests of the students who attend Margaret River Senior High School. This stance has been endorsed by our School Board and has been articulated to all community groups that have been granted use or hire of MRSHS facilities.

The factors that will determine the placement of facilities on our site are:

- Educational needs of students at MRSHS. The placement of facilities must be in areas that do not disadvantage our students and lead to students missing teacher instruction time. Safety of students and prevention of loss of instructional time will be paramount in our decision making.
- Occupational safety and Health of both the students and staff of MRSHS.
- Maintaining the viability of the School Farm, which was the reason the land was bequeathed to MRSHS via the Department of Education.
- Safe access for buses and parking for both parents and staff on the MRSHS site.

An increase in the use of offsite facilities is not in the best interests of students and is not a viable option for the school.

Career and Vocational News

VET SUCCESS 2016

Students who study less than three ATAR subjects automatically fall into the VET sector as well as all students completing a Certificate course either onsite or at TAFE.

We were extremely proud of the success that our students achieved in all certificate courses and their dedication to complete the required units of competencies.

We generally have over 50% involved in our VET program and over 90% of these student achieved a full VET qualification at a Certificate 2 or higher. Over the Year 12 cohort 68% of students completed VET units of competencies.

Work placement makes up a significant part of the VET program and is pivotal in providing employment opportunities and networks for our Year 11/12 students.

At the end of 2016 we have several students secure apprenticeships and traineeships, full time employment, TAFE or a mixture of TAFE and employment and several students looking into alternative pathways into University such as Nursing and Education. Our 2016 Year 12 students always represented MRSHS with maturity and strong work ethics and it is wonderful seeing them as young adults now in our community following their desired pathways.

Kara Beecham

Career and Vocational Co-ordinator

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Financial Information

Secondary Assistance Scheme

The Secondary Assistance Scheme is available to parents or independent secondary students who hold eligible concession cards. It comprises an Education Program Allowance which is paid to the school, and a Clothing Allowance that can be paid to the school or the parent.

How to Apply

Forms are available at the Main Administration Office at the school. Parents need to provide proof of eligibility and a school officer needs to sign the form. This needs to be applied for in first term of each year that the parents are eligible.

Eligibility

Available to parents of secondary students if the parent is a holder of: Pensioner Concession Card; or Health Care Card (Family card only - not for a specific child for medical purposes). A student can apply only if they have been classified by Centrelink as an independent student and must produce documentation from Centrelink identifying them as living independently. Eligible parents that home school their children can also apply through their Regional Education Office. Parents of students in receipt of ABSTUDY through Centrelink are only eligible for the ABSTUDY Supplement Allowance.



APPLICATIONS CLOSE 7TH APRIL 2017

Cristina Oliveira

Manager Corporate Services