Calendar Events

**Week 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Year 10 Testing Week 1 (all week)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
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**Week 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Year 10 Testing Week 2 (all week)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday - Thursday</td>
<td>Year 7-9 Testing Week (all week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 21 - 23</td>
<td>P&amp;C Meeting 7-30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday - Thursday</td>
<td>Yanco AHS visit</td>
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<td>October 21 - 23</td>
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**Week 4**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>LEAPS Graduation 5-8pm</th>
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<td>October 29</td>
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**Week 5**

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<tr>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Community Consultation 5.30 – 6.30pm (Library)</th>
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<tr>
<td>November 5</td>
<td>Excellence in Teaching Awards 6.30pm (Hall)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Excellence in Teaching Awards 6.30pm (Hall)</td>
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**From the Principal**

**Expression of Thanks**

I have not long returned from an extended period of long service leave, where I travelled with my family to London and then on to Germany, Switzerland and Austria. I was able to see many places of interest, including the Globe Theatre in London, where I saw a performance of *Julius Caesar*, and of course, the British Museum where I was able to see the fabulous collection of mummies, the amazing Assyrian collection with the winged bulls and the intriguing Rosetta Stone. I also managed to catch up with an ex student of mine from many years ago who is now an auditor with Price Waterhouse Coopers in London! In Germany, I settled my nerves and took a Zeppelin ride and in Austria, sang my heart out on the *Sound of Music* tour! I would like to thank Mr Tishler for relieving as Principal during my absence and also thanks to Mrs Costa who relieved as Deputy Principal during that time.

I returned to school in time to say farewell to Year 12, 2014 and wish them well. I know that Mr Tishler thanked the outgoing student leadership team in the last newsletter but I would like to add my words of thanks to Sidharth Autar, Nethanjah Costillas, Jaanvi Kapadia and Alex Abdullah for their outstanding contribution to our school. I said at their farewell assembly that they have set the bar very high but I do feel confident that our incoming leaders: Teresa Bernado, Hamza Butt, Dylan Scarborough and Amy Huynh will meet the challenges of leadership at this level and be marvellous ambassadors for our school.

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**PARENTS PLEASE NOTE**

**Students absent from school**

Where a student is absent from school, a note explaining the absence must be received by the school within 7 school days. Where a note is not received the absence will be recorded as unjustified. This cannot legally be changed should a note be received after 7 days. Absences both justified and unjustified are recorded on school reports.
Best Wishes to Year 12
Year 12 have just commenced their Higher School certificate examinations and again, I wish them all the very best for their examinations and beyond. I hope to catch up with them at the special morning tea to be held in Week 11 of this term, once they have received their results.

Year 12 (2015) Commencement
Year 11 officially became Year 12 (2015) at our ceremony of Commencement held in Week 1 of this term. Thank you to all the parents who attended to support their child. Preparing a young person for the Higher School Certificate is a team effort and the support of parents during this often stressful period is vital. If you have any concerns regarding your child’s progress or wellbeing, please direct them in the first instance to the Year Adviser, Mrs Ferris. Mrs Ferris is supported in her role by Mr Buckley, both of whom are located in the Science faculty.

Planning for 2015 – 17
Schools, just like any other organisation, are required to determine goals for the future and prepare a plan on how these goals are to be achieved. School plans are usually done on a three year cycle and as our current three year plan is concluding this year, we are now looking to begin work on our next three year plan, which will run from 2015 – 17. I am very keen to involve as many members of our school community as possible in this process and welcome the opportunity to work with parents and community in this way. To that end, I am holding a short community consultation workshop on Wednesday 5 November, from 5.30 – 6.30pm. That date coincides with the inaugural Macquarie Fields HS Excellence in Teaching Awards evening, where will recognise and celebrate contributions to teaching and education research from not only our teachers, but also our Future Teachers. Many of our parents will be attending that event to celebrate with their very own Future Teacher, so it means we can have two events, one evening!

Excellence in Teaching Awards – Advance Notice!
As you are no doubt aware, the MFHS Future Teachers initiative has been enormously successful, with over 120 students from Years 8 – 12 actively participating. As we are about to conclude our first full year of the program, I am keen to recognise the commitment and dedication of the students and to that end, I am announcing the establishment of an annual Excellence in Teaching Awards ceremony to be held on Wednesday 5 November, commencing at 6.30pm. This ceremony will not only recognise excellence in teaching at the Future Teacher level, but will also recognise the outstanding work done by our teachers in the classroom, in extra-curricular activities and programs and in research throughout 2014. We will also induct new members to the Future Teachers program. This event will be a wonderful celebration of teaching, of our students’ interest and commitment and of the achievements of our teachers, and through them, our school. This is a not to be missed event, so save the date. More details will be sent home towards the end of Week 3.

Return Visit to MFHS by Yanco Agricultural High School
You may remember that we embarked on a massive road trip to Yanco Agricultural HS in May this year. We took over 75 students from our school and Prairiewood HS to visit Yanco AHS, as well as the schools in the Narrandera district. It was an extremely successful visit, which, in turn, followed on from the initial work done by staff as part of our Leadership Alliance project, which focuses on building leadership capacity amongst staff. It is now time for the return visit by staff and students from Yanco Agricultural HS. A contingent of around 40 staff and students will be arriving at MFHS next week and they will be very much supported by our Future Teachers. The visitors will each have a buddy, including the staff, and they will also have the opportunity to involved in after school activities, workshops and social events. I would like to thank the Future Teachers who have volunteered to assist us with the organisation of this event. The skills they acquire will stand them in good stead as they
progress through the Future Teachers program. I will feature some photos and a follow up report on this visit in the next newsletter. Mr Celestino is doing a wonderful job with these students and I thank him for his enthusiasm and commitment. He is a wonderful role model for our Future Teachers!

I hope you enjoy reading about all the activities in which our students have the opportunity to be involved!

Mrs J Dolstra
Principal

Special Education Faculty Report
Our Special Education Faculty is an integral part of Macquarie Fields High School and we engage actively in events within the school and the wider school community. We endeavour to model best practice and excellence in inclusion. Once again, this year we have worked effectively as a highly-qualified professional team, with the assistance of supportive parents, to improve accessibility to services and programs for a wider group of students in our school community through, both the daily operation of our faculty and through special education events and programs. Through ongoing collaborative planning across the school and the recognition of individual student and teachers' achievements, support for individual students with additional support needs has been realised. The achievements of our wonderful students are at the heart of our success as a faculty. As such, we celebrate together the many achievements of our faculty and school many of which are detailed below.

Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy
This year we had a large increase in students from the Special Education Faculty participating in NAPLAN testing. Results showed a marked improvement in numeracy and an increase in many areas of literacy. We congratulate students for their efforts. We thank teaching and non-teaching staff for their dedication in the inclusion of effective strategies to develop skills in literacy and numeracy across the full range of regular curriculum and life skills subjects.

One of the students in our faculty, who has transitioned successfully to a mainstream class for English, achieved the highest mark in his mainstream class for his half-yearly examination. Two of our students in Year 9 who have successfully transitioned to mainstream Mathematics classes, are enjoying their learning within these classes. Many thanks go to Mr Plowes, Mr Vujanic and Mr Jansen in Mathematics, Mr Wilkie and Ms McKeown in the English faculty and Ms Barnes and Ms Wilson from the Social Science faculty for their effective inclusion of students and provision of support for students with additional learning needs. In addition, we thank and acknowledge the excellent work of mainstream teachers who have taught our students this year.

Achievements in the Performing and Creative Arts
This year our faculty has facilitated students' involvement in the State Dance Festival. Caitlyn Ryan, Michaela Rist and Lauren Weblin from the Shining Stars Ensemble, were selected to perform at the Seymour Centre on Friday 19 September. These students were also invited to participate in the NSW Public Schools Regional Dance Festival earlier in the year. Their performances have been truly inspiring. Students involved gained confidence as performers, proudly representing our school at the highest level of dance performance within the Department of Education and Communities. We thank Ms Purdon, the organizing teacher, and Ms Wood, our Learning Support Officer, for their wonderful efforts in preparing students for their many performances.
For the third year running our faculty has also supported a group of students who have successfully auditioned for the NSW School Spectacular in the D’Arts Ensemble. Successful performers included students from both special education and mainstream classes. These dancers involved are Jack Colman, Lauren Weblin and Caitlyn Ryan. We congratulate these students for their great auditions and we look forward to seeing them perform at the Sydney Entertainment Centre this year. We encourage you to support them in this performance event.

Students work was also showcased this year as part of the annual MFHS Art Exhibition. We congratulate the students for their wonderful work. Students who participated in the exhibition included: Kaitlyn-Rain, Alex, Caitlyn, Danielle and Richard. We thank the Visual Art teachers and in particular we acknowledge the work of Mrs McDermott for her support of our students studying Photography this year.

Achievements in PDHPE, Zone and Regional Representation
We congratulate students from our faculty who achieved fantastic success in sport. Three students achieved zone representation in sport and two students achieved regional representation.
Caitlyn Ryan (Year 10) achieved zone level representation in swimming. Alex Sueili (Year 7) and Scott Graham (Year 9) achieved at a zone and regional level for athletics. We look forward to seeing what they can achieve next year.

Caitlyn at School Athletics Carnival

New PDHPE programs have been organised for students to promote access to community facilities in the area including a new tennis program and a gym program. We thank Ms Boyles and Mr O’Brien for their wonderful work with our students and the implementation of new and interesting sports programs including tennis. The PDHPE faculty, under the leadership of Ms Boyles and Mrs Ninopoulos, is to be congratulated for their enthusiastic approach to inclusion of students with support needs throughout the year.

Caitlyn - Gym Program

Achievements in Student Leadership SRC Representation-
Students from the Special Education Faculty have been actively involved in student leadership opportunities within the school and in the wider community. Alex and Kaitlyn-Rain represented the students in Special Education classes on the Student Representative Council. Next year our faculty will be represented by Jazs Wilson and Rayna Rapo. We thank Mrs Ninopoulos for on-going her support.

Future Teachers Program
Two of our students Ian Kirk and Richard Sov attended the Future Teachers Conference at the University of Sydney. They participated with enthusiasm in a lecture and a tutorial. Alex and Caitlyn also attended the Pop-Up Classroom at Macarthur Square Shopping
Parent and Community Connections Program

Our Parent Connection Program has continued to expand this year. We have now included parents of students with additional needs from mainstream classes within our program. The focus of the first afternoon session was to provide information on Cyber Safety and the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Program for students in Year 9. Mr Morales’ and Mr Pingets’ professional presentations for parents and students were most valued and effective in explaining these important 21st Century initiatives to an appreciative audience.

The subsequent meeting was focused on School to Work Transition. Our transition teacher Ms Wilson and faculty organiser Ms Purdon presented school to work support strategies to parents and students. Our guest community speaker was Ms Leanne Stanton from the Autism Advisory Service. Many of our parents continue to form valuable connections, pre and post–school with this support service.

Achievements in Transition to Work

Work Fit Program

This year we have renewed and extended our focus on developing the work readiness skills of our students. This has been achieved through a cluster of initiatives under the banner of our work-fit program including: a Terrific Teens Project, Work Placement and A Transition to Work and Further Education Expo. These innovative programs, designed by our faculty in collaboration with staff, businesses and community services, are based on research and best practice in achieving effective transition to work support for students with additional support needs.

Terrific Teens

This term students have been involved in an intensive social skills project in preparation for work and life beyond school. Boys and girls have been involved in group programs. Hygiene and health care, deportment (sitting, walking, posture and manners), personal presentation and fashion, skin care and makeup, party etiquette and technology etiquette/ cyber safety were areas of study. Thank you to Ms O’Sullivan, Ms Purdon and Ms Wood for their ‘terrific’ work on this project. Ms O’Sullivan has also worked to extend the program so it has become integrated within the PDHPE Life Skills curriculum.
Work Placement
Students in Years 8 – 11 both from both Special Education and mainstream classes participated in a variety of work placements as part of our Work-Fit Program. Workplace sites included: Campbelltown Veterinary Hospital, Bunnings Crossroads, Afford Industries and Woolworths at Glenquarie Shopping Centre, the school library and front office. We wish to thanks all of these organizations and their staff for their support. Students enjoyed their placements and look forward to work placements in the future. This program has been coordinated by Ms Purdon and supervised by staff from across the school. We thank all those involved for supporting students, as we consider that preparation for work is essential for our students.

Transition to Work and Further Education Expo
In September, we organised and hosted our inaugural Transition to Work and Further Education Expo at our school. This Expo, held in the school library, was designed to provide information for students and their parents from special education and mainstream classes with careers, TAFE and university information. The Expo was well attended and included representatives from Casula High School.
Businesses and services showcased included: Afford Industries, NOVA Employment, the Autism Advisory Service, Sydney South West Area Health Service, the RSPCA, Macquarie Fields TAFE, the Whiddon Group Aged Care Services, ASPECT and Transition Advisors. I personally thank all these organisations, the Special Education faculty team, the Student Engagement and Attainment Pillar Team and Learning Support Teams for their support of this event. We appreciate the Library staff’s support for the Expo.

Achievements in Community Access
Our faculty arranged for students to attend Stewart House this year, as part of support for students in Special Education classes and across the school. Students had a most enjoyable time. They had the opportunity to develop confidence and life skills in a range of settings and activities including Taronga Zoo and Homebush Water Park. The work on this project by Ms Wood and Ms Purdon is very much appreciated.
Sailing Program
This year has seen the expansion of our community access program. Students extended their sailing program from last year where they sailed on Penrith Lakes with small sailing boats, to experiencing sailing on Sydney Harbour, departing from the Royal Sydney Yacht Club. Students from mainstream classes and special education classes worked together again to great success, in this community access program. They had a fantastic time adapting their sailing skills to a larger vessel. Many experienced steering the yacht. As you can see from the photos below the weather conditions were perfect for sailing. Staff also enjoyed the experience.

Achievements in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning: Fieldwork Program
In an endeavour to enrich the curriculum through cross-curriculum planning, implementation and make it meaningful for students, we took students to the Environmental Education Centre (EEC) at the Royal National Park. Students experienced bio-diversity a range of different coastal and rainforest environments. The rainforest walks were most educational with a focus on indigenous culture and traditions. Students proved themselves to be wonderful geographers and scientists, adept at working in a range of natural environments. Evaluating coastal management plans to better manage human and naturally occurring changes to the coastal eco-systems was a major focus. Activities included completing measurements of wind direction, airspeed, air and water temperature and water quality. Students in
Green class learned valuable life skills as part of this integrated curriculum experience.

HSIE integrated Curriculum Project - Where in the world is Miss Hannaford?
As a result of attending a special education conference, Ms Purdon and Mrs Mafi collaborated with Ms Hannaford on planning a cross-curriculum technology enrichment project. Miss Hannaford worked with the Green class to design and create a hand puppet named ‘Lucy’. The class then followed Lucy and Miss Hannaford on their world trip via Miss Hannaford's blog. The progress of the intrepid travellers was plotted on a world map in the classroom titled ‘Where in the world is Miss Hannaford?’ Students learnt interesting historical facts about each of the destinations, as well as developing an improved understanding of geography. The students and staff thank Miss Hannaford for all her efforts and informative reporting.
Science Mini Lab Initiative
This year, under the guidance of the Head Teacher science Mr Matchett, a new science lab was created for students in Special Education classes. The purpose built lab provides a learning space that specifically caters for improving our students’ learning in science. We thank Mr Matchett for his foresight and interest in supporting our students. Students are enjoying conducting experiments with the support of their science teachers, in what they consider to be a fantastic facility.

Technology for Learning – This year we have extended our technology to assist in the teaching of the new Australian Curriculum and to support our students learning through appropriate assisted technology. A class set of ipads are now available for students. Three desktop computers have been installed in each classroom. Ergonomic furniture has also been purchased. A purpose built computer lab has been designed to assist students with access to technology and the incorporation of VET Business Services as part of our teaching program in the coming years. I thank Ms O’Sullivan for her wonderful work in coordinating the technology resources in our faculty.

Study Skills Program
In Term 3, Mrs Mafi and Ms O’Sullivan coordinated and taught study skills to students after school on Wednesday. This project was open for students from mainstream classes to attend. Students appreciated the specialist support provided by special education staff gaining specific instruction and support in their academic studies.

University Partnerships: Mentoring and Research
As a faculty, we value our links with universities as a means of remaining current with our practice in the field of Special Education. As such, we have sought to strengthen our ties with universities this year. We are developing a symbiotic relationship with universities, where universities are informed of current Special Educational practice in our school and re-training and pre-teachers have the opportunity to be mentored by experienced practitioners in improving their teaching practice. In turn, our faculty has the opportunity to be informed of current research and best practice in Special Education and be included in current research projects.

This year we have mentored re-training teachers during their extended practicum, mentored pre-service teachers in their Special Education Volunteering experiences and presented for numerous cohorts of Pre-service teachers. Interestingly one of the pre-service teachers was once taught by the Head Teacher. We have also participated in one doctoral research project and one post-doctoral
research project and participated in post graduate university mentoring subject.

Our faculty would like to thank the University of Sydney, Macquarie University and The University of New South Wales for their work with our faculty this year. We appreciate the support and commitment of Ms Dolstra, Mr Tishler, Ms Trieu and Ms McDermott in improving links with our university colleagues, to better support students learning.

In conclusion, I wish to thank and give recognition to my team of caring and dynamic teachers and non-teaching staff who have worked hard throughout the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Senior Executive for their continued guidance and support. The work of our Welfare and Learning Teams including wonderful school counsellors, has been invaluable in the provision of whole school support for our students. I also wish to applaud the Executive for their interest and support of our programs this year.

Mrs Veronica Mafi
Head Teacher, Special Education

English Faculty Report

The English Faculty again welcomes this opportunity to inform the community of what is happening in our faculty and subject area.

The Faculty farewells our current HSC cohort and wishes them well. We know that we have prepared our students thoroughly and that those who have put in the work will do well. As they leave our new cohort is being formed into Year 12 HSC classes. It is important that parents to discuss with their child the important decision about what English course to take. The English Faculty, in particular, is concerned that the English Studies course is being undervalued by both students and the community in general. The course is designed for those students who are struggling with the volume and level of difficulty of work in the 2 unit courses. It is a course that allows students to build their skills.

Another Faculty concern is with the tremendous increase in the number of students who are being tutored. Our concern is not with those tutors that have actually taught the relevant course or who have experience marking the HSC. What we find is that too many tutors appear to lack experience. We would argue that just having completed the HSC is not enough. Too many inexperienced tutors are introducing poorly considered material to students that does not align with what the class teacher is presenting. This has caused needless discord in the important relationship between teacher and student.

Before you commit to having your child tutored, ring their teacher to make sure that they are working to the best of their ability.

Our faculty room is being refurbished at the moment and with the programs for the new syllabus being introduced and the changes to the HSC English courses there is an exciting sense of change in the faculty.

Mr Wilkie, Head Teacher English.

SWS Regional Senior Extension English Camp

Earlier this year the Preliminary Extension 1 students had an opportunity to attend a Regional Senior Extension Camp run by Ms Judge and a teacher from another school in the SWS region. This event was held at The Tops Conference Centre over two days and enabled the students to get to meet other students who were also undertaking studies at this level. It became an opportunity to learn significant skills in writing creatively and overcoming the dreaded writer’s block!
Students experienced some great quality presenters. Students had a chance to listen to experiences from ex-students who have completed HSC Extension 2 successfully or taken up writing as a fundamental part of their tertiary degree or as a career. Tony Britten, HSC examiner and frequent speaker for the English Teachers’ Association was there to direct Extension 2 students down the path to success. Ashley Hay, the writer, has been shortlisted for a number of awards, and winner of the People’s Choice Award, 2014 NSW Premier’s Prize. There was critical time for free writing too which the students found very beneficial given this extended time is hard to find in the classroom.

The Year 12 team were local winners but lost their regional final to Bankstown Girls High School with a tricky statement, however, they had a wonderful time and met religiously every week for training. Once they were knocked out of the competition they were firm participants in coaching their peers assisting our newer debaters and passing on that very specific knowledge needed in this area. Taylor Donovan was highly committed to peer training and needs to be congratulated for multi-tasking in this area despite preparing for her HSC.

The Year 11 team was almost a brand new team this year. At this level, the new team had a lot of work to do but they worked at it as best they could amongst other senior commitments. Unfortunately they were knocked out in the local competition and it is hoped that they will enhance what skills they have learnt to be ready to audition for next year. Kasvi Luthra from this team was quick to jump on board as a peer coach for the younger teams and I know the newbie Year 7 team really appreciated her talents.

Debating and Public Speaking 2014
At Macquarie Fields High School we have had some fantastic debates with the result being a local area winner in almost every year group. We would like to congratulate everyone who auditioned and made it into a team this year. Some of the auditions trailed on for 3 to 4 weeks for only a few hotly contested spots.

The Year 9 and 10 team were both sensational teams. We expect to see them at State level very soon. Unfortunately, they had to compete against each other. The rivalry was intense but positive on that final day. The Year 10 team nicknamed themselves the A-Team and the Year 9 shielded themselves with the nickname, The Knights. Both coaches, Ms Trieu and Mr Hicks watched on with baited breath as their teams duelled it out. Unfortunately the skill of
the Year 10 team won out by a fraction and they progressed well into the regionals. Illness on the crucial day of the semi-finals cost them their entry into the next level. There is always next year. Great news though, Krishtie Mofazzal from the Yr 10 team made it in as a reserve to the Regional Debating Team in the try-outs recently.

Debating Peer Coaching

The Year 7 and 8 teams are still debating at the moment. The strength of the Year 7 team has grown over the year. They have taken on board many new skills and been keen participants in debate training since the beginning of the year, turning up enthusiastically at the beginning of lunch every Thursday. The training will pay off, although it looks like the Year 8 team might just beat them in the finals.

Thank you to all the coaches:
Year 12 Team: Ms Judge; Year 11 Team: Ms Ingale; Year 10 Team: Mrs Trieu; Year 9 Team: Mr Hicks; Year 8 Team: Ms Hall and Mr van der Kley; and the Year 7 Team: Ms McKeown.

Thanks have to go to the students for all the hard work, particularly those students who put in the extra effort to always be at training or to help out others on our debating Edmondo site.

Debating members this year were:
Year 12 Team: Taylor Donovan, Justine Nguyen, Zain Afzal, Jenny Nguyen
Year 11 Team: Kasvi Luthra, Kenneth Pahn, Megan Amos and Ishan Guptarom Yr 10.
Year 10 Team: Krishtie Mofazzal, Pooja Salimath, Riya Suri and Amrit Singh

Public Speaking events included:
Phillip Garside Competition held at Hurlstone Agricultural High School. Here Megha Sevekari was from Year 9 was a successful winner. The Legacy Public Speaking competition was hosted here at Macquarie Fields and we had two participants Brianne Perera and Ashraf Olife. Ashraf was successful in this competition and went on to participate in the very large Regional round of the competition held at Lewisham Arts Centre. In the Plain English Public Speaking competition we had Katherine Livanis and Kenneth Pahn competing, with Katherine successful and going onto the Regional level. Kenneth Pahn did extremely well for his first time and almost made it through if it wasn’t for the tricky impromptu. Both Megha Sevekari and Kenneth Pahn also represented the school at the Quota dinner held at night at Ingleburn RSL back in June.

There is still more to come. Megha Sevekari and Ashraf Olife have put their hand up to participate in the challenging UNYA Voice competition held later this month. We wish them all the best in this new competition. Students are to be commended for volunteering for these competitions. They take a lot of preparation and students have to do a significant amount of research independently then work closely with supporting teachers who help them refine their speeches. It takes critical practice as well, especially for the confronting impromptus. Some competitions like the UNYA Voice competition and Quota require students to have portfolios of prior achievements and call students to gruelling interview panels prior to performance where they have to answer questions they don’t even receive in advance.

Debating and Public Speaking Co-ordinator
Imelda Judge
Year 10 Debating Team

The success of the Year 10 Debating team in the Premier’s Debating Challenge has been a continuation of the dedication and desire that drove the team to build on last year’s achievements. Riya Suri at first speaker and her exponential growth as the establisher of the team’s strength followed by Amrit Singh at second speaker dealing out the main force of the argument with the directness of a right hook. Finishing the argument Krishtie Mofazzal presenting both the integrity of her team’s argument, and the fallibility of the opposition with crystal clarity, made for a winning combination. However, one cannot forget the contributions of the fourth speaker, the ‘silent partner’ in the actual debate but the ultimate enforcer in the preparation time Pooja Salimath.

From the perspective of the debating coaches and their adjudicators one factor left this team undefeated until the quarter finals for the South West Sydney region; their willingness to embrace feedback. This team listened carefully to mentors and worked hard to improve their skills. Debaters can, at times, be perceived as overly arrogant but this team recognised the valuable skills they were developing with every debate; skills that are crucial in all senior subjects and also in all workplace environments where thinking on your feet and working in a team under pressure are valued.

The team will continue to build on these strengths as an increasingly stronger team in 2015 with personal targets and group achievements clearly defined. A great thank you needs to be extended to various people. Firstly, thank you to parents for their support in recognising this very important extra-curricular activity. Secondly, to the staff in the school library which becomes the debating nexus during these very busy times and finally to the other Debating coaches and coordinator who provide additional support for students and the organising coach.

Mrs Luisa Trieu
HT Teaching and Learning

Luka Lesson and the Red Room Company Visit

Back in March we were offered the opportunity to have Luka Lesson come and visit the whole of Year 9. Luka Lesson is an Australian slam poet, and a self-described "conscious hip-hop artist" of Greek- Australian heritage. He has been a winner of Slams, including the Australian Poetry Slam final & Melbourne Poetry Festival final. He is a songwriter and spent 2012 touring writers’ festivals and independent venues throughout Australia, Asia, Oceania and North America. He has also had experience in working as a workshop facilitator with both hip-hop and poetry at university in China, teaching students in The Bronx (USA) and running Indigenous programs in Australia.
His performance of his own poetry provided our Year 9 students with an opportunity to listen to someone deliver social commentary in a very accessible and relevant way.

Given the movement to the New National Curriculum it was an interesting and very ‘real’ way to expose students to challenging and cultural diverse perspectives experienced through this person’s skilful ability to utilise language creatively and musically. Following his performance Luka then hosted a booked-out workshop for thirty five of our young students, many of whom entered a Poetry Writing Competition to be part of this opportunity.

Students who participated in this workshop also had their work displayed on the Red Room Company website. Check out the site below.


Those that contributed poems to the competition were also given personal feedback from Luka. This was a highlight for some of our students. We were delighted to have such a young and talented poet ‘in the flesh’ here at Macquarie Fields High School.

We thank Tamryn Bennett from the Red Room Company for working closely with our school on this project and making it such a successful experience.

Mrs Judge

Operation Art

Operation Art is annual program run by the Department of Education and Communities and Westmead Children’s Hospital. Students’ artworks are selected by their schools and all artworks are professionally framed and exhibited at The Armoury at Sydney Olympic Park. School from across metropolitan and regional NSW are involved in this project and this year over 700 artworks were exhibited.

From this exhibition some artworks are then selected to be placed into Westmead Children’s Hospital, the children’s wards in regional hospitals and a number of different government offices. Artworks can also be selected as part of other Department of Education initiatives like The World’s Biggest Classroom.

This year four of students were chosen to represent Macquarie Fields High School at Operation Art. They were Dylan Scarborough, Kent Le, Gandharva Dhumal and Shameelah Ali. Artworks which these students created were selected by the Visual Arts staff of Macquarie Fields High School because of their exemplary quality. We are very proud of all the students whose work was chosen for this program. Special mention needs to be made of Gandharva Dhumal whose artwork has been selected for placement into a regional hospital and Kent Le whose artwork has been chosen for inclusion in The World’s Biggest Classroom. Both these students are to be congratulated on receiving recognition for their work at state level.
Join Saver Plus and match your savings, dollar for dollar, up to $500 for educational costs including:

- school uniforms and text books
- computers, laptops and tablets
- excursions and camps
- sports equipment, uniforms and lessons
- TAFE, traineeship and apprenticeship costs
- music tuition and instrument hire.

You may be eligible if you have a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card, are at least 18 years old, have some regular income from work (you or your partner) and have a child at school or studying yourself.

Contact Liz Tinney at the Benevolent Society on:
4633 3722 or 0407 310205
Email: liz.tinney@benevolent.org.au