Principal’s Report
Kirsty Trahar

Dear Families

It is hard to believe that we are more than half way through this term. As the term progresses, I continue to be pleasantly surprised by the vast array of educational opportunities that students at Penola High School are offered. The Year 9 Initiative Week is one such example. Please take the time to read the details of this year’s program as detailed in Kristen Bence’s report.

As you would be aware this week the school was involved in an external school review process. This is a process that all schools will experience over the next few years; Penola High School is one of the first secondary schools in the state. The process is designed to look at the school’s improvement processes and provide recommendations which will support all schools to raise student achievement and sustain high performance. My sincere thanks to all who were involved: students, parents and staff, their time and honesty was much appreciated. Whilst the school is yet to receive the formal report, initial feedback indicates that Penola High School is a school that provides a supportive and enriching learning environment. Staff are committed to their profession and are willing to be lifelong learners themselves, extending their knowledge and skills. The review confirmed that the direction the school is currently taking, focussing on students developing the skills to be powerful learners and critical thinkers for the future, approaching learning with a growth mindset and being the ideal learner is a positive one. The next step for the school is to develop specific actions to extend this even further. This will also be complemented by the focus of the partnership, and future professional learning opportunities and projects, such as the ‘Enriching Year 8 Mathematics Project’.

One such professional learning opportunity will be our next pupil free day, Monday 14 September 2015 where the focus will be ‘Intellectual Challenge for Powerful Learners’.

On a final positive note which recognises the fantastic efforts of staff at Penola High School, we congratulate Dave Vannini, who has recently been notified that he is a finalist in the 2015 SA Excellence in Public Education Awards. Dave is a finalist in the support staff section of the awards and I know that you will join me in wishing him all the best in the next round, as he has contributed significantly to providing literacy and numeracy support for students at Penola High School.

Kind regards

Student illness/injury while at school

Parents and students are reminded that if a student is feeling unwell or is injured at school, they are to report to the front office for assistance. Students are reminded to not text message their parent from their mobile phone to ask if they can be collected; they are to report to the front office and they can then wait in the Sick Room while staff contact their parent/guardian to arrange transportation home and the absence can also be recorded.
The 2015 Year 9 Initiative culminated with a showcase of students’ work on Friday 14 August. Students presented a range of final products and spoke about their learning journey, discoveries and developments throughout the production process.

Planning for the Initiative began in Learning for Life sessions early last term with students identifying an area of interest or passion. Over the next six weeks students were assisted to narrow this into a focus area and develop inquiry questions for investigation during the Initiative week. A range of areas that were investigated included: welding, Australian Diamonds netball pre-season training, Italian cooking, personal training, animal photography, cartooning and animation, disc jockeying, desserts of the world, the science behind horse eventing, sub-box construction, farming, writing and producing music, and student banking/accounting.

Imahgen investigated writing lyrics and music for her own song, a very original topic. Through her research she dissected the themes of music, how to write a song using poetry techniques and how to apply it to music at her final presentation. Brandon M studied DJing and his mode of presentation was the most original I have seen over the years of the Initiative. He used a video projector to show the DJ Board while showing how to mix and arrange different techno style music and created his own mini dance club atmosphere with a lighting display. He researched different DJ artists and styles of music creating an excellent back up folio of work showing his learning. His presentation was well received by all students who were watching. His passion for music really showed in the excitement he demonstrated for his topic. Another outstanding presentation was made by Gorgia R, who studied the topic of the science of horse eventing. She demonstrated the before and after preparation for a horse and even researched the genetics behind horse breeding for eventing. She brought in her own horse and demonstrated a massage technique used after an eventing show. Joanne D showed how to keep up your physical fitness through a personal training regime using different types of fitness through a range of exercises. Emily W did her presentation on banking and saving to the Year 4/5 class from Penola Primary School, which was very engaging, especially with the chocolate money she provided them. Nick R created an excellent sub-box for his car speaker, which was very professionally made. Erin F and Emma R investigated animal and portraiture photography using a range of digital camera and digital editing techniques. Rory W and Max B spent their week in the tech room researching and creating welding techniques and developing a routine for maintaining a motorbike,
**E-Language Sister School Partnership**

*Kathleen Phillips*

Late last term I applied for a grant to help establish an E-Language Sister School Program. The focus of the program is to allow students to interact electronically (face to face with students in Japan) through a variety of media such as, email, blogs, wikis and through the webcam. I was lucky enough to obtain a grant of $2000.00 to help set up the program. This money will be used to buy an interactive projector, webcam & speakers.

The sister school program is designed to give students at Penola High School real life experiences; using their language skills in Japanese and learning more about Japan from the perspective of a Japanese teenager, which in turn, will allow Japanese students to learn about Australia. It also fits in beautifully with the Australian Curriculum Language Achievement Standards.

The program consists of four parts. Part One – establishing a working party, this is to be made up staff, students and parents or interested local community members. Part Two – Promotional Package of Penola High School. This is designed to showcase Penola High School and the local community to our potential sister school. Part Three – Japanese Language Project, create a project that can be completed between the two schools. This project will allow students to interact with each other in the languages they are studying. Part Four – Maintain the sister school program. Once the project is finished the aim is to then maintain the sister school relationship. Hopefully, setting up exchanges between both groups in the future. If you are interested in the program and would like to join our working party, please contact the school on 8737 0000.

**School Uniform**

The wearing of the school uniform is school policy and endorsed strongly by the Governing Council, as well as by the majority of parents. The uniform is available for purchase through the school. A note in the diary is requested on the rare occasion when the wearing of the uniform is not possible. If a student is not in uniform and has a signed note no further action is required. When a note is not provided a note will be sent to parents requesting their support to ensure their child is in uniform. Please note shorts/skirts should reach the bottom of students’ fingers when they are standing with their arms by their side.

- Windcheater $49.50
- Polo Top $33.00
- Boys Shorts $22.00
- Boys Grey Pants $23.50
- Girls Shorts $22.00
- Girls Skirt (Sum/Wint) $63.50/$83.50
- Unisex Trackpants $44.00
- Unisex Jacket $71.50
- Beanie/Bucket Hat $7.70/$7.70
- Scarf $11.00

**Course Counselling**

*Michael Hentschke*

Term 3 has seen the course counselling and subject selection for our Year 8 to 11 students begin through our Parent Information Night on Wednesday 19 August which was strongly attended. Course counselling interviews will be held Thursday 3 September 2015. Your child should bring a letter home Friday for you to confirm an appointment time. Year 10 and 11 students will be required to select subjects for Stages 1 and 2 of their SACE.

Students have received information during Learning for Life sessions and Personal Learning Plan (PLP) lessons to allow them to make the most suitable selections for their future. Well considered selections are important as they provide the data for class allocations and timetabling for 2016. We encourage parents to discuss the options and selections with their child to help them complete the relevant subject selection forms.

The Stand Like Stone Foundation has a Penola Coonawarra Well Being Sub Fund, which accepts donations from the community, the benefit of which is solely targeted at charitable projects that benefit the Penola Coonawarra area. Stand Like Stone conducts two rounds of grant applications per year. The next grant round opens on 15 August 2015 and closes 30 September 2015. Organisations are invited to apply for grant funding of up to $2000, for charitable projects that benefit the community.

The Penola Coonawarra Well Being Sub Fund working committee is inviting groups to apply for these grants. The grants specifically look at:

- helping those who lack the resources to obtain what is necessary for a modest standard of living in the Australian community
- advancement of education
- having other purposes beneficial to the community such as public works and community facilities; promotion of industry, commerce and agriculture; defence and public order; improvement and protection of the environment; moral improvement
- having a public benefit rather than a private benefit
- relieving poverty, sickness or distress

For further details please visit the grant section of the Stand Like Stone Website or contact any of the Penola Coonawarra Well Being Sub Fund working committee listed below.

- Annette Balnaves 0428 854 162
- Rhett McDonald 0448 540 375
- Ellie Wilson 0413453259
- Mark Edwards 0407522929
- Janet Brodie 0400028566

http://www.standlikestone.com.au
Out of the Shadows into the light

World Suicide Prevention Event

Suicide is the leading cause of death for Australians under the age of 44. Lifeline believes most suicides are preventable and we all have a role to play.

Join us for a Free community breakfast and a walk in the light of a new day. Show your support and commitment to preventing suicide and remembering those lost to suicide.

Supported by City of Mount Gambier, District Council of Grant & Rotary Club of Mount Gambier Lakes

Mel Hirth Lookout
Saturday September 12th
7:30am for breakfast

RSVP ESSENTIAL by 4th September:
For Merchandise & Catering, please
REGISTER Online at:-
www.outoftheshadows.org.au/find/find-a-walk
Or Email: office@lifelinese.com.au
Or Phone: 8723 2299