

National Partnerships News Prairiewood High School

Locked Bag 46, Wetherill Park BC, NSW 2164

No. 2 : April 2010



What we have achieved so far ...

- Employment of an additional part time learning support teacher – D. Shaw
- Appointment of Head Teacher Teaching and Learning
- After School Learning Support Centre commenced Monday 8th March
- Yr 8 GAT (UNSW) testing 12th March
- Elevate education – senior study skills seminar held 22 March for year 11
- Full staff presentation by N. Liberatore relating to NAPLAN results for Prairiewood HS students, 9th March
- SMART data interpretation and software training session, 16th March with Maria Serafim, CEO – Data
- Year 7 transition into high school interviews

Contents:

What we have achieved so far ...

After School Learning Support Centre

Yr 11 Elevate Education Seminar

Year 7 Transition Interviews

GAT - General Achievement Test

Appointment of new staff

2010 ... still to come ...

After School Learning Support Centre

The After School Learning Support Centre commenced Monday 8th March in the school library and operates Mondays and Thursdays during the school year. It is now fully set up and the teachers are supporting approximately 30 students.

Nine teachers are involved in this program as tutors – E Beattie, R Benetel, M De Lutiis, J Edwards, N Liberatore, R Richards, M Rubbi, L Ruzic and E Walsh.

The students involved in this program participate in a range of literacy-focused activities designed to improve their learning outcomes in all areas of their schoolwork.

The program is divided into four main components: Multilit reinforced reading, general activities for reading and reflection, numeracy (to commence Term 2) and assistance with general homework.

This program will be expanded during Term 2 to include other students (across all years) who are seeking teacher help with completing homework and assignment tasks. Already, feedback from both students and staff has been extremely positive.

Elevate Education Study Skills Seminar

Year 11 students had the opportunity on 22 March to focus on what they can do in order to succeed and achieve their potential over the next two years.

The Elevate Education Study Skills seminars are inspiring and rewarding as they target those behaviours which are required to guarantee success as well as provide strategies to counteract the negative behaviours when it comes to study or meeting assessment task deadlines.

The seminar consisted of two one hour sessions – the Study Sensei and Time Management. There were five presenters who each took a group of 30 students.

Following the success of the two sessions now held (both yr 12 & 11) it has been decided to extend the program to yr 10 to reinforce the importance of the School Certificate and to assist them in their preparation for it.

Year 7 Transition Interviews

During March, Ms Gandlgruber and Mrs Natale interviewed all year 7 students. The purpose was to ascertain how they were coping with year 7, what they thought about high school and to give them the opportunity to raise any concerns they may have. The most common responses were:

1. School is for learning.
2. Students are happy about coming to school.
3. Students are getting on well with others. Only a few instances of bullying.
4. Teachers are providing challenging work, giving encouragement and listening to the students.
5. Learning is fun.
6. Favourite subject is one, which is active or practical.
7. Best results will be in Maths as many are being tutored and feel more confident.
8. Most students do not want to involve themselves in additional activities outside their timetabled commitments THIS year.
9. They miss their old primary school friends and teachers.
10. A number of students complained about the increased workload of high school.
11. Students enjoy the variety of subjects available, the movement around the school, the specialist classrooms and making new friends.
12. Two thirds of the students already have an idea of what they want to do or be when they grow up.

General Achievement Tests

Last month, our Year 8 students completed special tests organised through the University of NSW and Year 7 students will be involved during Term 2. The tests targeted mathematics, reading and language and writing skills.

It is anticipated that results of these tests will further help us to develop the best possible strategies to support all students in Years 7 and 8 and that by having students complete another round of testing next year, we will be able to accurately measure progress and improvement levels.

Appointment of new staff

- **Head Teacher Teaching and Learning** – Congratulations to Mrs Smith on her appointment to this new position in our school (Mrs Smith is retiring from her position as Deputy Principal). Her main duties in 2010 and 2011 will involve working with Head Teachers and staff across all faculty areas, evaluating, reviewing and developing the classroom teaching and learning programs for all students at Prairiewood High School. Additionally, in this role, Mrs Smith will be working with teachers of our Selective Classes to further develop and refine the programs and strategies introduced in Year 7 for this year and also working with our local partner primary schools to support teachers and students with other "joint initiatives" being developed for both primary and junior secondary students.
- Advertisements are being placed in local papers for three **Community Engagement Officers** - one Aboriginal, Assyrian and Pacific Islander for one day a week.
- **Additional Learning Support** – D. Shaw has been employed for three days a week to assist with students' literacy and numeracy
- **Additional ESL support** – there will be an additional teacher. If you know of any person who has ESL teaching accreditation, please speak to J Pickering or T Gandlgruber as soon as possible.

2010 ... still to come ...

Term 2

- "Numeracy Knockout" (Prairiewood HS & primary schools)
- PHS "Meeting of the Minds Challenge" (Prairiewood HS, as well as local primary and high schools)

Term 3

- "Going Potty" (Ceramics-based workshops with students from Prairiewood HS & William Stimson PS)
- Yr 10 Elevate Education Study Skills Seminar

Term 4

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