Emerald Secondary College

**The Bush Telegraph**

Emerald Secondary College is a Learning Community

Principal- Jodie Doble
College Council President- Paul Woods
Assistant Principal- Mike Jaremczuk
Assistant Principal- Estelle Alder
Business Manager- Chris Woodhouse

**Term 1 - 2016:**
**Issue 1- 5th February 2016**

**FEBRUARY:**

*Mon 8:* Whole School Assembly

*Mon 15:* School Photo Day

*Mon 15:* Yr 11 & 12 cricket

*Mon 15:* Yr 12 Student/Parent Information Evening
EPAC 7.30pm – 8.30pm

*Tue 16:* Yr 7 BBQ Welcome Evening. Meet at 6pm outside EPAC. Siblings welcome.

*Wed 17:* Intermediate Cricket

*Mon 22- Wed 24:* Yr 10 Advance Camp

*Tue 23:* Yr 11 & 12 Sport

*Tue 23:* Photo Catch up day - Yr 11 & 12

*Wed 24:* Yr 7 Softball & Baseball

*Thu 25:* All school Swimming Sports

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- Literacy News
- Host Families Wanted
- Emergency Procedures outlined

**SOME WORDS FROM THE PRINCIPAL:**

Welcome back to all students and families. I hope you all have had an enjoyable break over the holiday period.

This is the first of our 2016 weekly newsletters. We have moved to a weekly newsletter to enable us to keep our whole learning community better informed of events across the College. Subsequent newsletters will be available weekly on the ESC website and emailed to you on Fridays.

2016 started extremely well, and we hope this will continue throughout the year. The First Day conferencing was a tremendous success and it was lovely to see so many students, families and teachers discussing goals, aspirations and expectations for the upcoming year.

I would like to thank all our students for an excellent start to the academic year. I am sure we all remember those first days of High School and I was proud to see the positive and supportive welcome our student community gave to our new Yr. 7’s. We hope that all our students have a successful year.

It was lovely to hear the positive comments to the start of our long term building and grounds project. Our new stairs open up the entrance to the College, and the repainting of the whole College is underway.

I would like to welcome back Ms Emily Hayes who has returned from family leave.

I would also like to welcome our new staff to the College who have joined us, replacing staff who have retired, moved out of the area or picked up promotions.

In the *English* Domain we have Mr Michael Nelson, Ms Rebecca Noone and Mr Rueben McCallum. In *Maths and Science* we have Mr Dom Ignacio teaching Maths and Physics, Ms Aurelie Appasamy teaching Biology and Maths and Ms Sarah Troupson teaching Maths. We look forward to their enthusiasm and the expertise they bring to our College and to the student’s learning. I would also like to welcome Manpreet Dhilon, Samantha Broda and Susan Ashford who join our Teacher Assistant team, and Kellee Ballard who joins us as our Lab Technician supporting the Science Domain.

A big thank you to all our parents and families for ensuring that their children are in full school uniform. We have heard there have been some concerns with our current uniform supplier and we will be looking to improve this service.

With our College motto ‘**Access to Excellence**’, the College is extremely committed to providing an excellent education for all our students and I welcome feedback to assist me in leading the whole staff to improve learning outcomes for all our students. With the support of the staff I am looking at the possibility of an Open Day during school time to welcome parents and families to come into the College and see our daily teaching and learning activities.

Throughout term one, we have a number of whole school sporting events and I encourage all our parents and families to return the permission forms to allow all our students to participate and attend these events. Our sports carnivals and whole school events support our College ethos and develops our sense of belonging and pride in our College community.

Jodie Doble
Principal
LITERACY NEWS:
During the first 2 weeks of school, students in Years 7 and 8 will undergo Literacy testing. Students will be assessed in reading comprehension, spelling, writing and dictation.

All results will be stored in “growth folders” so that students, parents and teachers will be able to monitor student growth in these areas.

To facilitate the testing program, students will require a pencil and eraser, items that are listed on their booklist.

All students will be visiting the library to borrow a reading book, which should be brought along to these classes, to read when tests are completed.

If there are any queries about the testing program, or other literacy issues, please contact me on: 59685388.

Tracey Ferguson  ESC Literacy Leader

HOST FAMILIES WANTED:
Emerald Secondary College is a global learning community in a true sense. The sister school arrangement with Mimasaka Senior High School in Japan formally began in 1997 after we hosted a group of students from Mimasaka for the first time in 1996. This exchange program is one of the longest running in Victoria and 2016 marks the 20th anniversary of our sister school relationship. Over 400 students from both schools have been on this exchange.

Every year we host our Japanese visitors in March and send our Year 10 and 11 students to Japan in September. In 2016, we will be hosting a group of 15 students from Mimasaka from 13th to 25th March.

We are looking for people who would be willing to host a student for this time. You do not need to be studying Japanese to host. Hosting a Japanese student offers a unique opportunity for your child that they can’t experience elsewhere.

Please contact Daisuke Kawakami, Languages Coordinator via Compass or contact information below if you would like to know more about the exchange program and hosting a Japanese student.

Phone 03 59685388  Email  kawakami.daisuke.d@edumail.vic.gov.au

Daisuke Kawakami - Languages Coordinator
Dear Members of the College Community,

Emerald Secondary College is committed to ensuring that our school community is as prepared as possible for the current bushfire season and other potential emergencies. The safety of our students and staff is paramount. As such, it is important that our whole College community is aware of our expectations and processes for our College Emergency Management plans.

The College has invested in a system that enables parents and families to be informed and/or updated with any potential emergency information through our SMS system, email and the College website. It is for this reason that we ask for the cooperation and support of our parents and families.

I cannot stress enough to parents the importance of helping the College maintain accurate records of contact details – relevant phone numbers and email addresses. Parents can update these themselves via Compass or simply phone the office to have them check and update these contact details. It is also important that parents and families, particularly of those who walk or travel by bus, discuss alternate plans should they be unable, for some reason, to make their way home as per normal.

In the event of any emergency, it is vital that parents and families do not text or call their child in class, but contact the College main reception on 5968 5388, or check our website and SMS system.

We also ask that parents and families do not put themselves at risk during any emergencies by making their way to the College.

Please take the time to read the important information attached to the rest of this letter. If you have any concerns or questions please don’t hesitate to contact me at the College.

Yours sincerely

Jodie Doble
Principal
**School Closures:**
Due to its geographical location (in the Dandenongs) Emerald Secondary College is a school that has been placed by the Department on the Bushfire ‘At Risk’ Register. Schools that have been identified as being at high fire risk will close on a day declared a Code Red Fire Danger Rating Day within the relevant Bureau of Meteorology district. The College may also apply to the department to close on days of Extreme Fire rating.

Parents need to note that notification of closure on a Code Red day is likely to be several days in advance, whereas closure for an extreme day may well be given with less than 24 hours’ notice. In an event of any closure the College will communicate this through our SMS system, Compass and the College Website. On a Code Red Day NO school buses will run and no one is allowed on the College grounds.

If the College closes on an Extreme Day, parents must communicate back to the College that they have received the information regarding the closure. Instruction on how to do this will be in the notification sent out. On Extreme fire days parents need to be aware that school and public buses may also not run.

In the event of any school closure, no one is allowed on College grounds.

**School Bus Services:**
The College has a clear action plan related to its school buses during any emergency. The College has updated lists of all bus travelers, routes and contact numbers of drivers. On days of potential high fire danger the College also checks the CFA warnings website before allowing any bus to leave the College each afternoon on those days.

The College will hold any bus back if there is a risk of potential threat to the safety of students. Furthermore bus routes passing through at-risk areas, or routes operated by schools in at-risk locations, will be closed on high-risk fire days and this decision is made in conjunction with the Education Department and PTV.

An SMS will be sent out notifying parents if any bus routes are impacted upon and this will also include advice for parents on what they can do.

**Communication:**
The College has developed a number of ways for members of our community to access information relating to Code Red Days and for responses to localised emergencies.

1. **School Notice:** In circumstances where there is adequate time to notify families prior to an event (such as a Code Red Day), students will be issued with a notice to take home to their family outlining arrangements for that day.

2. **Email:** The College has set up an email group which will allow the school to contact families with a short message with up to date information.

3. **Website:** The school’s website www.emeraldsc.vic.edu.au/ will carry relevant information that families can access.

4. **Text Message:** Again the College has set up an email group which will allow the school to contact families with a short message with up to date information.

**Other:**
Throughout the year the College will also conduct a number of practice emergency drills with staff and students as a way of educating the school community should a real emergency occur. Before and after these drills the College Principal team works with staff and students to inform and fine-tune these drills.

Due to the location of the College, there are occasions where the power is cut for a period of time. The College has developed a system to cater for this allowing us to maintain our communication lines and operations during any power outage.