

Welcome back to 2017 and to all those members of our community who are celebrating Lunar New Year:

恭喜发财 Gong Xi Facai

새해 복 많이 받아 Sae-hae Bok Mani Badah

And for those celebrating Tet:

Chúc mừng năm mới

I hope that the Year of the Rooster is a prosperous and happy year for all of our community.

A special welcome to our Year 7 students and parents. I trust that your first week at Hurlstone has not been too traumatic a change from primary school. Regardless of how being at high school alters the ways in which you learn or confronts you with the amount of work you are expected to do (if this hasn't started yet, be assured it soon will) please know that being a Hurlstonian is in itself rewarding. If you throw yourself into both your academic learning and to the development of your whole self through engaging in the extra-curricular life of your school, you cannot help but love your time here.

For those who we already know, welcome back after your sojourn and get ready for another year of challenge, reward and growth.

There have been several improvements around the school over the Christmas break. Any visitor to the school will have noticed the painting which has taken place across the school— if you haven't noticed the new colours, you will have definitely encountered the fresh paint smell attacking your olfactory nerve endings. As of this week the hall will be able to go back into use after its flooring was stripped back, resurfaced and remarked. There have been some other works done to sure up our utilities but these are out of sight underground and hopefully nobody will be noticing them.

As detailed in my brief email to parents last week there have been some additions to the girls uniform. Female Hurlstonians can now wear either shorts or pants, as well as a short sleeve junior blouse to accompany these items if girls choose to wear them. These items are becoming quite popular, especially with the inclement weather and the demands of working on the farm during Agriculture lessons. I would thank the members of the P and C, with special thanks to Ms Susan Hemsley, for listening to the students over the last two years and making this pragmatic change that has already positively impacted on the comfort, safety and, most importantly, choice of 47% of our school population.

The most enigmatic change still discussed at the school is the relocation of the school to the Hawkesbury Campus of Western Sydney University. I have been asked many times in the last week what is happening, so here is a brief update on the three main areas of this process:

1. The building of the new block at the Glenfield site:
The new STEAM (Science, TAS, Engineering, Art and Maths) block has now progressed to the stage of Development Application. This has been lodged with council. It is expected that the building of this block will begin in September of this year and be completed by mid 2018. The plans are very impressive and the school community has had extensive input into their development and design.

2. The renaming of the Glenfield Site:
There is not anything to add since my last update about this element of the relocation process. A report concerning the community consultation regarding the school's name was forwarded to the Minister for Education's office and we now await a decision. I have been asked if the transition to a new Minister has halted this process. All I can say is that the community awaits the decision of the Minister and I will let you know of any announcement as soon as I am able.

3. The building of the agricultural high school and boarding facility on the site of WSU Hawkesbury campus which will be called Hurlstone Agricultural High School:
There is no announcement that I can make beyond any information I disseminated at the end of 2016. The Project Reference Group continues to discuss and plan for both the construction of this site and continues to build the relationship between the Department of Education and WSU. Once again, as soon as there are further developments I will let the entire community know.

If you wish to keep abreast of the projects then you can find information from the Department of Education at:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/innovative-education-successful-students/newschools/glenfield-educational-precinct/hurlstone-agricultural-hs>

One aspect of the Glenfield site which is causing some concern at the moment is the use of the carpark on Roy Watts Road by parents in both the mornings and afternoons. Some parents are using the carpark entry to turn around which is being detrimental to the safety of both staff and students. It is clearly labelled at the entry to the carpark that it is a "Staff Carpark: No unauthorised vehicle access or drop off."

The school is:

- taking temporary measures to allay any risks.
- planning for a permanent solution.
- requesting police assistance to ensure the safety of all members of the Hurlstone Community.

Please work with us in this endeavour by not putting yourself or others at risk.

The 2016 Higher School Certificate once again displayed the breadth and depth of knowledge our students possess as well as the insight and innovation with which they approach their studies.

78% of all of all courses attempted earned either a Band 5 (48%) or Band 6 (30%). This trend was seen across all KLAs with strong performances across the arts, humanities (including English), sciences, mathematics and, of course, agricultural subjects. Even though there were many outstanding results special mention must go to General Mathematics, PDHPE and Agriculture which gained results which were 19.83, 15.41 and 14.56 percent above state average respectively.

There were many stand out students but seven who stood out from the pack of excellent results were Reaz Ahamed, Sanjay Alapakam, Jessica Chen, Richard Kha, Suzanne Ngo Peter Phanouvong and Tyson Subasinghe. All of these students made the All Rounders list which means that they achieved a Band 6 (or Band E4 for any extension subjects they studied) for all ten of their units.

There were another five plaudits which should be noted. Sadia Qureshi came 17th in the state in Biology, Adam Herman came 4th in the state in General Mathematics, and, most pleasing of all for a school with Hurlstone's focus on the land, Jack Lawrence, Harsha Chugh and Jessica Chen gained 6th, 4th and 1st respectively in the study of Agriculture.

The 2016 HSC has seen our graduates go off to many pursuits in 2017 from gap years to courses as diverse as Education, Music, Business, Nursing, Commerce, Pharmacy, Occupational Therapy, Actuarial Studies, Oral Health, Medicine, Psychology, Science, Vet Bioscience, Engineering, Physiotherapy, Criminology, Laws, Economics, Optometry, Politics and IT. They also have been accepted into a wide variety of Universities across NSW, the ACT and Queensland.

I will be discussing the achievements of the 2016 HSC cohort in much more detail at the next P and C meeting, as well as ensuring that I update the school community on the relocation process, if there is any news to give.

In addition, as always, I will be more than happy to answer any queries that the parent and community might have about the school. It would be especially pleasing to see the parents and carers of our Year 7 students. Please consider joining us for the meeting to be held in Clarke House on Saturday 18 February at 2pm.

Regards

Daryl Currie

Principal