Dear Families

A lot happening as we approach the end of yet another school year and a lot to look forward to......

Marvellous celebrations with our Night in November; Walker Film, TV and Media Awards; Awards Night; Year 12 Graduation and Formal – really great for our students and their families. The strength of the student-teacher relationship at our fine school was on show at all of these events. I take this opportunity to thank all of our Year 12 parents who have just had their last child graduate – as I said in my speech on Graduation morning, your support for the work of our staff, my work and the unwavering values of our school has been nothing short of amazing all the way through – thankyou, thankyou, thankyou...

Thankyou also to our Year 12 parents who have responded to the Year 12 Exit Survey - great feedback, instructive, positive and along with the completion of all Year 12 student surveys gives me great direction for our school in terms of facilities, resources and in a raft of other areas. Exceptionally valuable.

2016 Musical – it is The Wiz! It will be held in Term 2 during Week 6 ie Thursday 19 May, Friday 20 May and Saturday 21 May. There are many opportunities for students of all Year 9 students to be involved. Auditions will begin Week 1 Term 1. Rehearsal schedules will be uploaded to the website once casting has been determined.

Start dates for 2016 – our mainstream setting - Years 7, 8 and 12 will commence on Wednesday 27 January and Years 9, 10 and 11 will join us on Thursday 28 January. Our Flexi School dates – Year 10 on Wednesday 27 January; Year 11 joining in on Thursday 28 January and Year 12 commencing on Friday 29 January.

Parents of Year 7 students 2016 – please note all Year 7 students are required to wear formal uniform on their first day. This is inclusive of black leather lace-up shoes – please check our website for information on all clothing items and also dates for the opening hours of our Uniform Shop.

Parents of Year 7 students 2015 – with the move in 2016 of your child out of our dedicated Year 7 building and into the wide array of other classrooms this means your own communication with school staff will go through our main office as opposed to through staff in W block.

Office opening hours 2016 – our main school office, our Flexi School office and our Special Education office will be open for business from Wednesday 27 January. Our Textbook Office will be open from Wednesday 13 January.

Bring Your Own Device [BYOD] - all state schools will be moving to the BYOD method of digital technology from 2016. This year a number of schools within Queensland have been trialling the process. You will see, in the mail-out of your child’s report card, a succinct booklet explaining what this specifically means. In short, state schools no longer benefit from what was previously the National State Secondary Schools Computer Fund [NSSSCF]. This arrangement provided computers for state schools. This means, in 2016, we are inviting our students to bring their own laptops [we already have approximately 150 students who do this] and with a user pays fee [$50] they will be connected to our network, monitored through a filtering system and students will work with those in classes and at home. In 2016 we will retain and maintain a large number of our NSSSCF fleet to ensure no student is disadvantaged in terms of having access to a laptop. You will see in the booklet that there are certain specifications that are required to be adhered to when bringing your own device – these specifications allow for easy link to our network. I stress the laptop should be dual band and our suggestion is that the case your child has to provide protection for the laptop is a ‘laptop skin’ [retail cost approximately $20] – this will allow for easy carriage to and from classes. As per routine students will be required to store their backpacks in their lockers so, as I say, best to ensure laptop protection is light. No need for students to bring a charger to school as students will understand their laptop is required to be fully charged each day on arrival at school. For future reference you will also see our BYOD Information booklet on our website. Great news for 2016 we look forward to our NBN connection providing 100 mb bandwidth for our students and staff.

Student Leaders 2016 – following an appropriately rigorous process of application, interview and speech-giving by applicants to the student and staff bodies, we, yet again, have the most outstanding group of young people who will work as our Student Leadership Team for 2016. All applicants I have to say were amazing. Each year we enjoy a plethora of quality from which to choose. You will see our 2016 student leaders presented on our website. Our Student Leadership Group 2015 have chosen to direct their substantial fundraising [88000+] to the YWCA women’s shelter catering to women and children who have suffered from domestic and family violence; the sponsorship of a room for a year at the Toowoomba Hospice and to a school in Cambodia where children who live in the most impoverished of circumstances are able to access an education via sponsorship of teachers, uniforms, books, lunches – truly inspirational.
Facilities update:

- 2 new classrooms and a staff office under C Block to cater to our ever-growing student number - we will be 1650+ in 2016 - cost $300,000.
- Reconfiguration of a general learning area to another industrial skills workshop which will cater to the ever popular subject area - cost $17,500.
- Replacement of our 600 Hall chairs - $20,000 - thank goodness!
- Refurbishment of our G Block boys' amenities - $20,000 - this involves a virtual gutting of the existing facility.
- Ongoing replacement of desks and chairs which all adds up given the replacement of one room of chairs is $2,200.
- Great news from the State Government ie we will receive flashing school zone signs - this will go a long way to enhancing the safety procedures we already have in place for our students.

Sincere thanks in advance to the wonderful members of HumeRidge Church who, with co-ordination from Ross Savill, will yet again complete a working bee with us to start the school year. The date is Saturday 16 January from 8am to 12 midday. Bring your garden implements if you are able to join us - we mow, whipper snip, prune, paint - you name it. It gives our Grounds staff and Janitor a great start to the year.

Congratulations to a number of our Year 12 students 2015 who have received offers for 2016:

- USQ Principal’s Recommendation Scholarships - 17 of our Year 12s have been successful in being granted early entry to USQ with Ben Willis being awarded a USQ Vice-Chancellor’s Scholarship to the value of $12,000.
- Year 12 student Isobelle Ritchie - awarded a collegiate scholarship to Bond University which includes 50% payment of her full course and a semester of tuition and accommodation free.

We have had a super year. Very best wishes to you and your families for a safe school holiday.

Best wishes
Maryanne Walsh, Principal

FLEXI SCHOOL Update

At the recent Flexi Awards Day 27 graduating students were awarded for completing 12 years of hard work and dedication. As staff we have shared with them many laughs, learnings and at times sadness and tears. Our job as teachers, mentors and support staff is done however we welcome the opportunity to acknowledge what has been achieved cannot be created without a team effort demonstrating care and concern. We all agree this could not be achieved if we all worked alone. Thankyou to all the parents of the graduating class for allowing us to work with your son or daughter, it has been a real privilege and honour.

The Year 12 students have shown through commitment to their goals and achievements at the Awards Day and the Formal that they are a responsible and mature group of students. Their actions throughout the year have been exemplary and their final weeks were a strong indication of their reputation as a responsible and supportive year group of which Flexi is very proud.

Congratulations to the Flexi Grade 12 class. We wish you all every success in future undertakings; all have great plans for full-time work, TAFE and University. You have proven yourself to be very skilled individuals who have the capacity to do great things with your lives. Thank you for all the times you brought a smile to our faces and our hearts. Please stay in touch.

Jo Brennan, HOD FlexiSchool

STUDENTS’ HEALTH

A reminder to parents/carers to notify the school about your child’s health.

Centenary Heights State High School is committed to supporting students’ health and wellbeing. We would appreciate parents/carers providing the school with any relevant health information that is required to support your child at school. This information is also collected at enrolment but needs to be updated regularly or if a new health condition develops.

Information about medically diagnosed conditions such as allergies, asthma, diabetes and epilepsy and other health conditions that may require school staff to provide support to students, including administering medication and performing health procedures, should be provided to the school. Additionally, any health need that may impact on school activities such as sports, outings (including camps) should also be discussed with the school.

Information should be provided in writing, and any specific health plans (only to be completed and signed by the medical practitioner) should be included. Please contact the school to discuss any specific requirements.

Please inform the school office staff of any changes to contact details or the contact details of the people nominated as emergency contacts.

Thank you for your assistance in this regard. All information is kept confidential and only disclosed to the relevant staff required to supporting your child.

For any enquiries, please contact the school office on telephone (07) 4636 7500.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE COVER FOR STUDENTS

Some school activities and physical education, particularly contact sports, carry inherent risks of injury.

Parents are advised that the department does not have Student Accident Insurance cover for students. If your child is injured at school as a result of an accident or incident, all costs associated with the injury, including medical costs, are the responsibility of the child, parent or caregiver.

Some incidental medical costs may be covered by Medicare. If parents have private health insurance, some costs may also be covered through the private health insurance. Any other costs would be borne by the parents.

Student Accident Insurance is an insurance policy that pays certain benefits in certain circumstances should your child have an accident.

It is a personal decision for parents as to the types and levels of private insurance they arrange to cover their child for any accidental injury that may occur.

Parents should contact their insurer or an approved Australian insurance broker for more information about student personal accident insurance for their child.

For more info visit: http://education.qld.gov.au/parents/school-life/health-wellbeing/accident-insurance-cover.html
AWARDS NIGHT

Our Awards Night was sensational! The auditorium at Humeridge was packed with very happy families there to celebrate the success of their young person. So many students rightfully received awards for participation and effort. Perhaps a highlight of the night was the wonderful performance from our strings orchestra headed by the inimitable Mrs Heather Schnitzerling. Heather, this year, has finally retired at age 84. During her time with us at CHSHS she has grown the strings program to significant numbers and the finest of quality. An equally wonderful performance from our student leaders as they delivered their speeches giving our audience a real snapshot of the year 2015 at our very fine school.


JUNIOR SECONDARY & LANGUAGES

As our school year comes to a close it is a great time to reflect on the fantastic time we have had – a massive year for our first ever cohort of Year 7 students. Despite all of the early nerves (mainly from staff and parents) our 265 students have come through with flying colours. A large number of them have just been recognised for their great work at our Gold Level Ceremony and have embarked on the end of year trip to Dreamworld, along with a big number of students in Year 8 and 9.

On Tuesday, December 8 we welcomed our 2016 Year 7 cohort as they became orientated with their future environment. Importantly, we also took the opportunity to provide a program for our Year 7 students to assist them with transitioning to Year 8 – we consciously focused on this important move this term. Our current Year 8 students have their timetables ready to go for next year and are looking forward to the elective subjects they have chosen. Bring on 2016 … but, let’s have a great holiday first!

Tim O’Connell, HOD Junior Secondary & Languages
On November 20th a wonderful group of students gathered to celebrate their hard work of five years in two memorial events. The Graduation Ceremony took place at HumeRidge Centre and was packed with students, staff, parents and well-wishers.

Our Guest speaker Bronwyn Herbertson reflected on her time as a student at Centenary Heights and reminded students to be proud of where they came from and that when they face adversity to remember what they had learnt through their schooling time.

Head of Year, Sandy Caldwell, gave her last Graduation speech, as like our Year 12s, she is now sadly leaving us at the end of year. Sandy reflected on how far the students have come and how proud she is of each and every student graduating that day.

The most moving part of the ceremony came in the form of the amazing Captains giving their closing thoughts. Ben Willis started their speech with humour and emotion. Retelling funny stories from his time at Centenary and honouring his friend Luke Fitzgerald who sadly passed away in 2008. Megan Little spent the majority of her speech encouraging and thanking the staff of Centenary who helped her along in schooling and personally. Nonimi Wasala brought drama to the occasion in the form of a comical re-enactment of Miss Maryanne Walsh dancing along with students outside the music block. Nicky Haeusler finished the Captain’s speech by giving tips that will come in handy as they all set out on their new adventures. The ceremony ended with staff forming a guard of honour to congratulate each student as they made their way out of the auditorium, symbolising the end of an era and the beginning of the rest of their lives.

After all emotions were spent, the wonderful cake made by Noelene Fairweather was eaten up quickly, students rushed to ‘suit up’ or to their long awaited appointments with hair and makeup in preparation for the formal. The arrivals were spectacular and at times quirky, especially the group of students arriving in a fire truck. The Year 12s, now big grown-ups, were ready to dance the night away, crowd the photo booths and ‘oooh and ahh’ over how great they all looked. A few randomly picked students competed in the ‘How Well Do You Know Our School’ challenge, answering fun facts about our school and doing their best impersonations of key school members.

The two celebrations of the day were a fitting end to a group of beautiful and special students who have changed our lives.

Donna Brown, Assistant Head of Year 12

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**EXTENDED ABSENCES**

Are you planning an extended time away from school for your child (e.g. holiday; medical intervention etc.)? For any period of time over 10 consecutive days you are required to follow an official process.

Education Queensland has a policy - Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation - which needs to be followed if your child/children will be absent from school for this period of time or longer.

Fact Sheets providing further details and Application Forms may be requested from the school office.

The last day of school for the Year 10s and 11s could not have been celebrated any more perfectly than at Dream World and White Water World! It would be an understatement to say that everyone simply had fun. The day was filled with screams (of happiness), giant American pizza’s, excited chuckles, Ben & Jerry’s ice cream, chilled snow cones and altogether ultimate adrenaline. A day that has a strong place in everyone’s memories!

Bianca Fowler, Year 11 Student Leader

Here is a brief overview of the year that was!

• January 2015: selling fairy floss with Rotarians at Australia Day celebrations

• February 2105: Valentine’s Day selling wrapped and delivered silk roses to raise money for our 5 year old sponsor child Sanjai who lives in India. $750 raised.

• March 2015: Annual Changeover Dinner where the new Interact Board was presented for the incoming year with Rotary Club Toowoomba South.

• March 2015: Interactors supported the Kokoda Challenge at checkpoints with the Rotarians; Jess (Interact President and Elliott (School Director) also assisted Bill Mason at the Rotary 9630 District Conference.

• April 2015: 2 x Anzac Day services were attended at Westhaven RSL Retirement Village by Interactors who then assisted with morning tea for the residents.

• May 2105: Mayoral Prayer Breakfast was attended by the Interact Board to hear a passionate speech delivered by Mission Australia CEO Catherine Yeomans.

• May 2015: Mrs Sandy Feldman presented as a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary Club Toowoomba South.

• May 2015: The Annual Lifeline Can Appeal. Non-perishable foods donated by the wide school community, stored free of charge in a Melco container and organised by the Interactors for presentation to Lifeline first week of June. 5911 items were presented to Lifeline Darling Downs!

• June 2015: Students assisted selling fairy floss with the Rotarians at the Queensland Day celebrations 1 June in Ruthven Street.

• August 2015: Jeans for Genes Day - Students gave a donation of a gold coin for the privilege of wearing jeans with their uniform to support genetic research. $500 donated.

• October 2015: Bandanna Day raising funds for CanTeen (teenagers affected by cancer) Students purchased bandannas and wore them to school for the week. $500 raised.

Looking over the year, not surprisingly, lots of great involvement, activities and special fundraising basically every 4 weeks for many very worthwhile and needed causes. The Interactors have once again lived up to their motto of “Interact with Impact”. Special thanks to Mr Bill Mason, Mr Paul Merry, Mrs Feldman and Miss Zylstra for their ongoing support and encouragement of our club.

Jessica O’Loghlen, Interact President 2015
Term 4 has continued to provide opportunities for our students to participate in a range of activities in school teams and also in individual events. Jayden Donovan is currently the Qld Under 18 Champion in wood chopping. He has recently represented Queensland at the Royal Adelaide Show and earlier in the year at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Jayden will compete for Australia in September next year due to his excellent results. Congratulations and well done Jayden. As this newsletter goes to press one of our students, Brielle Erbacher, is representing Queensland at the National Track and Field Championships in Melbourne. We have wished Brielle all the best and look forward to sharing her results in the New Year. We know she will put in her best, as always.

Congratulations to the following students who have recently been selected in the Darling Downs Water Polo team – Nick Reis, Nathan Harvey and Frederick Pfeiffer. Congratulations also to Nick Reis on his selection into the Darling Downs Triathlon team. Both of these teams will represent at State Carnivals in 2016.

We would also like to congratulate our girls Rugby Union Teams who have played a couple of “friendlies” against St Ursula’s College. These have been wonderful games. Thanks to Mr Cuthill and Mr Sykes for preparing the girls. Our Rugby League boys have also had the opportunity to play Harristown SHS in a game. A closely contested game was played. Well done boys. Thanks again to Costa and Mr Sykes for their roles in organising this event.

As this is our last Newsletter, we find it timely to say thank you to the wonderful staff who have given up their time to help the students at CHSHS in their sporting endeavours. We would like to acknowledge and thank the following staff for their exceptional guidance and support in the sporting arena: Mr van Dorsselaer, Mr Sykes, Mr Russell, Mr Hobson, Mr Nataleri, Miss Vorpagel, Miss Resetti, Miss Rowe, Mrs Irene Wilson, Mrs Louise Wilson, Miss Dowsett, Mr Murdoch, Mr Lachlan O’Connell, Mr Tim O’Connell, Mr Brayden Insley, Mrs Usher, Costa, Mr Cuthill, Mrs Kinivan, Miss McNellie, Mr Barrett, Mr McGregor, Mr Hunt, Mr McMicking and Mr Jackson. Without the help of these staff members, many sporting opportunities would not be possible.

Looking ahead to 2016, there are many trials that occur in Term 1. All trial dates will be advertised on our school website from the beginning of the year.

Chris Bartlett, Sports Co-ordinator

INTRODUCING INTERNET SAFE FAMILIES

INESS has been helping schools and teachers work with children to create safe and constructive environments online for 7 years.

As the online world continues to become a bigger part of our children’s lives, INESS have launched a new programme for parents to access the resources and skills needed to foster these environments at home.

Internet Safe Families publish regular articles with information on social networking websites and apps as well as providing training materials to help parents build an open and supportive environment for their children at home.

Direct link to the sign up page is: https://forms.sign-up.to/33939/1250