Basketball fun in Senior School

Jay plays in the Senior School Basketball competition
How did we go in the VCE in 2013?

The middle of December of any year usually finds me in an anxious state. This is the time that VCE results are released and as VCE Coordinator I am filled with a sense of anticipation but also apprehension.

In Victoria, VCE results are a big deal for schools. Private schools, in particular, can gain or lose students depending on their results. Figures that measure the average Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank (ATAR) and the percentage of students with ATARs above 90 are considered crucial. These figures appear on the websites of many prestigious schools and parents appear to be convinced that a school that produces excellent academic results must be a “good” school. Like any form of reductionism, ATAR results do not tell us everything about a school nor do they tell us everything about the student who gains a highATAR.

While at MECS we consider good ATAR results important, they are not the only measure of schooling success. We are equally concerned about how well our young people fit into their community, how well they would perform in a work place, what sort of partners they will be to a future spouse and a host of other roles. In short, how they are prepared for a full-orbed worship of God. Our other concern about VCE results is that they only seem to reward those who are academically gifted.

Given this preamble I am pleased to announce that last year’s cohort of students worked extremely hard and therefore gained our most pleasing set of results to date. If one is to measure academic success by the average ATAR, then, this year’s figure of 72.2 (an all-time high) is very impressive. This group excelled in terms of getting the best out of their ability. Almost 44% of our students obtained ATARs between 80 and 99.95 which again, is our best result in over a decade. Of the five students who gained ATARs over 90, two were boys and this continues the pattern we saw begin last year.

For some time now, we have worked towards - and gained - a success of a person’s VCE.

We are greatly encouraged by the vast majority of students who have gained of their very best, who have grown in more ways than can be measured by an ATAR and who are well-equipped to serve God in the next stage of their lives.

Roger

VCE Coordinator

PS For further reading the following article: ‘Uni entry and the great ATAR myth’ was published in The Sydney Morning Herald - www.smh.com.au/national/education/university-entry-and-the-great-ATAR-myth-20140221-335eh.html

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Percentage of Students gaining at least one VCE 3/4 study</th>
<th>Percentage of Students gaining at least one VCE 3/4 study</th>
<th>Median VCE Study Score (2012 data)</th>
<th>Percentage of Students gaining at least one VCE 3/4 study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billanook College</td>
<td>1, (1) 12.4 (23.2)</td>
<td>178, (170)</td>
<td>94 (83)</td>
<td>99 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donvale</td>
<td>2, (3) 12.3 (10.3)</td>
<td>150, (126)</td>
<td>86 (95)</td>
<td>100 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxley College</td>
<td>3, (4) 10.9 (8.7)</td>
<td>126, (158)</td>
<td>96 (88)</td>
<td>100 (99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECS</td>
<td>4, (5) 10.1 (10.0)</td>
<td>94, (90)</td>
<td>83 (78)</td>
<td>100 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plenty Valley</td>
<td>5, (6) 6.6 (4.5)</td>
<td>91, (82)</td>
<td>67 (79)</td>
<td>100 (99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Llydale Mercy</td>
<td>7, (5) 5.4 (7.6)</td>
<td>307, (306)</td>
<td>86 (87)</td>
<td>99 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgrave Heights C.S.</td>
<td>9, (7) 4.3 (4.8)</td>
<td>78, (29)</td>
<td>85 (100)</td>
<td>100 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llydale High</td>
<td>10, (10) 2.7 (3.7)</td>
<td>209, (296)</td>
<td>55 (77)</td>
<td>99 (99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llydale Heights College</td>
<td>11, (11) 0.2 (0.1)</td>
<td>101, (84)</td>
<td>88 (93)</td>
<td>95 (99)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SKETCHER’S SCOOP

Working Bee

Thanks to all the wonderful parents and students who turned up last Saturday for the first of our working-bees for the year. We started the day bright and early with an egg and bacon breakfast, and then we got into it. Buses were cleaned, retaining walls were built, storage areas de-cluttered, benches painted and mulch spread! 175 volunteer hours were given to our community to ensure our grounds and facilities are the best they can be. Thanks!

NICE Studies

Post-graduate studies with the National Institute of Christian Education (NICE) are a compulsory requirement of employment here at MECS. This is a big investment of time and energy that we ask of our staff on top of an already busy and demanding job. So why do we do it? As discussed in my ‘editorial’ a couple of weeks ago, teaching ‘Christianly’ is not something that comes easily. We need to be working through with other teachers all the time. I’m extremely proud of the fact that we have 14 of our staff completing Units this year. Jacqui and I are convening groups so that we can provide extra support and guidance. Please pray for all our teachers who have taken on this extra demand.

Staff Devotions

Every morning our staff meets in various combinations for staff devotions. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday we all meet together as a whole staff to share God’s Word and begin the day in prayer. This year we are focusing our devotions around the book of Psalms. Already in Psalm 1 we have been reminded about the need to ‘meditate on his law day and night’ if we are to have lives that ‘yield fruit’ for His Kingdom. Can I encourage you to check it out? Perhaps you could read this Psalm with your families and chat about what it means. There are lots of children’s bibles available that might help you do this in a ‘kid-friendly’ way!

Leadership Planning Day

This week, our broader leadership group met to review and set operational goals for the coming year. It also gave us an opportunity to share together some of the exciting things happening across our school and for us to discuss and define the sort of learning culture we want to see at MECS. Let me commend to you the great depth of experience and skills we have in our leadership teams. It was humbling to hear the great love and commitment they have to this place as we discussed our plans for the future.

Middle School Camps

Next week our Middle School will be deserted as all students will be out and about on the first of their camps. Learning outside of the classroom is an important part of our program here at MECS. Camps provide an invaluable opportunity for different skills and knowledge to be learnt. We look forward to hearing all about their exciting adventures on their return. A big thank-you to Yvonne who organises all the arrangements for our camping program across the school. She has done an amazing job, particularly with Peter Beams being out of action.

School Happenings

Primary School VIPs

Each week in our primary classes, one student is nominated to be the class VIP for the week. Each class has their own special privileges that belong to the VIP, but all the VIPs are invited to morning tea with the Principal. This week Narelle entertained our first VIPs for the year – here is the photo!

A Special Visitor

Last Friday Dr James G (PhD University of London) dropped in for a brief visit. James taught at MECS for 13 years, leaving us at the end of 2011 to take up the key leadership role at a very large Rwandan Tertiary Institution (around 4000 students). He is visiting Australia for the birth of his first grandchild and will return to Rwanda in a few weeks. There were hugs all round because in Rwanda you don’t handshake you hug! It was great to see him again.

Heather
Newsletter Editor

Narelle
MECS Principal

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MECS Notes

School Photo Day

School Photos are on Monday 17 March! Please put this date in your diary. Further information and envelopes will be provided in the coming weeks.

Nicole Nyhouse
Receptionist

Future Enrolments at MECS

Our 2015 Prep and Kindergarten classes have waiting lists! Many of our other classes also have waiting lists. We are currently processing enrolments for 2016, 2017 and future years. If you have a sibling of a currently enrolled student who you would like to be considered for a position at MECS, please ensure that you have completed an Application for Sibling Enrolment, available from the office and return it to the office as soon as possible.

If you are unsure as to whether you have already completed a form, please contact the Student Services Manager, Natasha via the office.

One of the great ways people come to know about MECS is by personal invitation and referral by our current families. We appreciate this greatly. If you have friends and family who would be interested in Christian education, please encourage them to telephone the school to speak with either Nicole or Amanda regarding an information pack being sent to them and also the possibility of coming in for a personalised tour of the school.

We also have our annual Open Day on Saturday May 10 from 10am – 1pm - this is a great opportunity for family and friends to come along and see the school.

Amanda and Nicole
Community Relations Officers

Meals needed

We try to keep a supply of frozen meals in the office freezer to offer families who need support and that freezer is nearly empty! If you are able to make a meal, please place it in a disposable container and list the quantity and ingredients. We would really appreciate your contribution. You can drop meals in at the Main Office anytime. Thank you.

Nicole and Amanda
Community Relations Officers

Friends of MECS

‘Friends of MECS’ is in its 2nd year of operation, replacing the previous group ‘Parents and Friends’, which was run by a wonderful group of volunteer parents for many years

Friends of MECS is headed up by the Community Relations team, Nicole Nyhouse and Amanda Steele, and its aim is to provide opportunities for parents to be involved in various ways in school life. Some examples are:

• providing meals to be given to families who are going through a difficult time
• helping out on stationery days
• helping out with the Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls
• being on the prayer chain
• being part of the catering team and helping coordinate fundraising events.

This is just the beginning! We would love to hear any new ideas and suggestions you may have for ways of getting people involved, building community and fundraising.

Please call Nicole in the office or email.

Volunteers Needed

From time to time we have events at MECS that need catering and our wonderful caterer Karen needs some extra assistance.

If this is an area you think you would enjoy helping out in please e-mail me nnyhouse@mecs.vic.edu.au. I would love to hear from you!

Nicole Nyhouse

Mooroolbark Community Festival

How would you like to meet some of the Mooroolbark community at their Festival on Saturday March 22, 10am to 4pm?

We would love to have some volunteer students and parents come along and man our MECS stall.

Dollarmite Banking

Just a reminder that banking day is Wednesdays. Any Preps that would like to bank can bring it in on Tuesdays for Term 1 and place it in the grey satchel in the classroom which will then be returned to them on the Thursday. I have ordered new updated wallet covers for all bankers as the previous ones all broke easily. Remember to look out for them as I will be replacing them as you do your banking. If anyone has any questions please contact me on 0425 821 947.

Evelyn Dubbeld

First Working Bee

Our first working bee for 2014 was great. There is nothing better than the smell of bacon, eggs, toast and coffee when you turn up to a school working bee at 7am in the morning! About 50 parents and children came along, including lots of new parents attending their first MECS working bee - it was great to meet them. There was also one family doing their last MECS working bee, as their daughter is in Year 12.

Our jobs included building a sleeper wall on our new path next to the staff room, mulching and tidying up the kinder grounds, washing the school buses, installing a new slide in the primary play ground and mulching around it, raking and tidying up the fitness path, cleaning pits and drains, staining seats, blowing leaves in all the parking, paths and play areas, pruning plants and picking up rubbish in the hard places. It was great to see new principal Narelle helping out, getting to know parents and experiencing the great time we have on working bees. We had a great time and the school looks awesome. Thanks for your help.

Peter and Steve
Property and Maintenance
Here comes the rain again

With pop-up cafés, restaurant, bars, etc. all the rage these days it was only a matter of time before we got a pop-up aquatic centre, and thanks to the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, in conjunction with the Bureau of Meteorology, we got one! It would have been the ideal night for Handel's Water Music at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl on Wednesday last week, but the program we ended up with was just as exciting.

The concert opened with the Overture to Wagner’s 1845 Opera Tannhäuser – a bracing introduction that builds upon a simple, yet powerful theme most effectively driven by the large brass section. Young British conductor Andrew G held the ship steady in spite of some occasional communication issues between the strings and brass, and eventually captained his orchestra safely home to a rousing reception from the brolly-wielding enthusiasts on the hill.

Katerina – winner of the ABC Symphony Australia 2012 Young Performers Award – was soloist in the ever-popular Bruch Violin Concerto No.1, and made fine work of the challenging solo passages, to the obvious appreciation of that really loud man up in the eastern wing of the bowl (not Mr Peele, surprisingly), whose whoops of delight could be heard over most of the orchestra throughout the concerto.

By the end of the interval only the hardcore enthusiasts remained stoically huddled in poncho-shrouded clusters on the grass. Those who braved the elements were treated to Stravinsky’s remarkable music to the ballet Petrushka, about a traditional Russian puppet stuffed with straw and sawdust that comes to life and develops emotions. The second of Stravinsky’s three great expressionist ballets, Petrushka follows the story of the main character through his adventures until he is killed by a Moor. The ballet ends with Petrushka’s ghost appearing to his slayer, who turns tail and runs for his life, leaving the audience to wonder who is “real” and who is not.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra’s reading of the score was spirited and expressive, if a little rough around the edges, and left just enough mystery in the air for the audience to call for an encore – the finale from Stravinsky’s first ballet The Firebird. This was the perfect resolution to the evening’s entertainment, signaling the dispersion of the clouds overhead and an end to the rain.

Congratulations to the music students and staff who braved the weather for our annual trip into ‘The Bowl’!

Tim
VCE Music Coordinator

MECS Notes

Levity Laws

(for some light humour)

Law of Mechanical Repair: After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch.

Law of Biomechanics: The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.

Law of Probability: The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.

Law of Random Numbers: If you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal; someone always answers.

Variation Law: If you change lanes, the one you were in will always move faster than the one you are in now.

Law of the Bath: When the body is fully immersed in water, the telephone rings.

Law of the Result: When you try to prove to someone that a machine won’t work, it will.

Law of the Theatre: At any event, the people whose seats are furthest from the aisle, always arrive last. They are the ones who will leave their seats several times to go for food or the toilet and who leave early before the end of the performance or the game is over. The folks in the aisle seats come early, never move once, have long gangly legs or big bellies and stay to the bitter end of the performance.

The Coffee Law: As soon as you sit down to a cup of hot coffee, your boss will ask you to do something which will last until the coffee is cold.

Murphy’s Law of Lockers: If there are only 2 people in a locker room, they will have adjacent lockers.

Brown’s Law of Physical Appearance: If the clothes fit, they’re ugly.

Oliver’s Law of Public Speaking: A closed mouth gathers no feet.

Wilson’s Law of Commercial Marketing Strategy: As soon as you find a product that you really like, they will stop making it, OR the store will stop selling it.

Doctors’ Law: If you don’t feel well, make an appointment to go to the doctor, by the time you get there you’ll feel better.. but don’t make an appointment, and you’ll stay sick.

Communication

One aspect of partnering with MECS is keeping lines of communication open. The MECS teachers are quick to contact parents if issues arise and we encourage parents to do the same. If it is a classroom issue please either email your teacher, see them after school or make an appointment.

If the issue is bigger, the Section coordinator would be the person to contact; Di in the Primary School, Sue in the Middle School and Cliff in the Senior School. If you have gone through both these steps and feel you need further discussion on the issue, the next step is contacting Narelle, the new principal.

If you are unsure of where to go or how to handle an issue please contact either Amanda or Nicole in the Community Relations Office and we will either help or direct you to the right person.

Thank you for partnering with us in this way.

Amanda & Nicole
Community Relations Office
Thursday was a great day for MECS Senior School basketball players. We took off in high spirits and that continued as both teams won their first game. The boys with Coach Hanna in charge had a good win and started to get their radar working when shooting for goal. The girls started well by convincingly winning two games in a row. As the day progressed the boys were able to win some and lose some with Coach Hanna sticking to his guns in giving all players a good run. The girls continued to win and a possible clean sweep was on the cards. They then met the other unbeaten team and were able to win by one solitary point.

In all a great day of sport. All players played in a great spirit and represented MECS with class. Well done to all involved.

Cliff
Senior School Coordinator
“If you go down to the woods today... or Kinder at the bottom of the hill....”

Last week the 4 year old kinder children (Koalas and Possums) brought their teddy bears to Kinder. As our orientation program draws to a close, we asked the children to bring along their teddy bears to help us make friends! We sang teddy bear songs, we went on a bear hunt and to finish the day we ate our homemade teddy bear biscuits or honey joys! The children have settled so well into their kinder programs and made many friends. Lots of teddies were very tired at the end of the day!

Wendy
Early Years Coordinator
MECS COMMUNITY NOTICES

MECS does not endorse the products or services of any private advertiser. No responsibility is accepted by Mount Evelyn Christian School for the accuracy of information contained in advertisements or claims made by them.

12 & under ‘All Girls’ Cricket Program

Cricket Victoria and the Outer East Eagles would like to invite girls to take part in a 6 week ‘all girls’ cricket program.

Come along and enjoy a game of cricket with other girls who love cricket! You can enter the program by emailing Jarrod including your name, DOB, address and phone number.

Wednesdays, February 26 – April 2, 5-6pm at Jubilee Park, Reilly Street, Ringwood. Cost is FREE!

The format is a fun modified game of cricket. Everybody bats, bowls and wicket keeps. The program is coordinated by accredited cricket coaches. All equipment is provided by Cricket Victoria.


For Sale

One male guinea pig, approximately 6 months old. Lovely temperament, and easy to care for.

5 baby guinea pigs (gender to be verified), available in 6 weeks.

Contact Lynda 0400 483 396.

Drum Kit for Sale

Remo/Pearl Drum Kit. Burgundy in colour. Full kit plus double kick, stool and sticks included. Good condition. $400. Contact Damien.

Ringwood Jets Footy Club

Seeking under 10 players for Saturday mornings. Contact Susan.

Unit for Rent

A furnished two-bedroom unit 10 minutes walk from the centre of Lilydale, has a garage and air-conditioning. Ideal for a young couple just starting out. $270/week.

Kilsyth Heat Basketball Club

Does your child like to jump, bounce balls, shoot hoops? Would they like to be part of a fabulous, family basketball club?

Join us on Sunday March 2 between 2-4pm at Yarra Hills Secondary School, Reay Rd Mooroolbark for a ‘come and try’ day. You’re sure to love it!

Free giveaways, competitions, fun, games and prizes.

Contact Richard. RSVP.

Wheel Chair Skater

Free demo and skate session with Christiaan Bailey - world number 2 wheelchair skater.

This even is part of the launch of the Council run Health and Wellbeing strategy.

Launch: 3pm Staion House.
Demo and skate session: 4pm Mount Evelyn Skate Park.

Check out http://www.youtube.com/user/SantaCruzSoulSurfer.

Calendar

2014 Term 1 Week 4: 24 FEB - 2 MAR

Fri 28 February
SP Swimming

2014 Term 1 Week 5: 3 MAR - 9 MAR

Mon 3 - Fri 7 March
MS Camps

Wed 5 March
MP Swimming

Thur 6 March
Grandparents & Special Friends Day 9am

Fri 7 March
SP Swimming

2014 Term 1 Week 6: 10 MAR - 16 MAR

Mon 10 March
Labour Day Public Holiday

Wed 12 March
Bluebirds Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom
MP Swimming
Interschool Swimming (selected students)
JP Mini Beast Incursion

Thur 13 March
SS Connect Morning Tea Staffroom 9am

Fri 14 March
SP Swimming

2014 Term 1 Week 7: 17 MAR - 23 MAR

Mon 17 March
School Photos

Tues 18 March
Prep Puppet incursion

Wed 19 March
Year 10 & VCE Drama Incursion

Thur 20 March
Parent Seminar (A) Staffroom 7pm

Fri 21 March
Year 7, Year 9 Boys & Year 10 Immunisations

Sat 22 March
Working Bee 8am-1pm, includes morning tea

Mon 24 March
SS Connect Morning Tea Staffroom 9am

Thur 27 March
SS Connect Morning Tea Staffroom 9am

Fri 28 March
SP Swimming

2014 Term 1 Week 8: 30 MAR - 5 APR

Mon 30 March
MS Swimming

Wed 1 April
MS Camps

Thu 2 April
SS Swimming

Fri 3 April
Year 12 Hoodie letter

Sat 4 April
Working Bee 8am-1pm, includes morning tea

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Gastro in Primary School

Parents of primary students need to be aware that we are currently in the midst of a gastro outbreak at school. Most cases have been among the Preps with a few other cases scattered through the other Primary levels.

Please be mindful that if your child shows any symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhoea they need to be kept home from school until it has been at least 24 hours after the symptoms have stopped. This will help control the spread amongst students. Teachers have been emphasising hand washing and not sharing food or drink bottles. Please be extra vigilant with these measures at home and do not send your children to school if they are unwell.

Thanks for your cooperation and understanding

Melinda Beimers
First Aid Officer

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