Welcome to Open Village 2015. The year has begun well with students engaging in a variety of learning opportunities. We’ve been very busy introducing the processes and procedures being used in the program.

During the year we will be investigating the concept of Community at a variety of levels. Currently we are focusing on our Year 9 and MECS Community and later in the term we will move on to look more closely at Melbourne.

Some Important Information

- As a part of CS studies for this term the students will be watching the M. Night Shyamalan film ‘The Village’ (2004). This motion picture has an M rating. The themes raised in the film will be discussed in class as a part of our study of community life. There are some fairly suspenseful scenes in this film that may be concerning for some students. Further information about the movie can be found at www.IMDb.com (rating is listed as PG-13 on IMDb). If you are concerned about how your child may react to this film, or have any further questions, please speak to their teacher.

- Part of our studies of Melbourne will involve an excursion to the City (Feb 16), and a camp (March 2-6). Details of the excursion are further on in this newsletter, and information about the camp will be sent home to you closer to the date.

- Due to the nature of the Open Village program students will not necessarily share common submission dates for Core Studies Projects. Please remember to check and sign your child’s diary weekly to see what tasks they are working on across all subject areas and when they are due.

- Immunisation packs will be sent home this week (Thursday). Please make sure you complete the information on the front of the pack and return it to the school as soon as you can.

City Day Excursion – Monday Feb 16

This excursion is an extremely valuable component of the students’ studies, acting as an immersion experience for our studies of Melbourne. Each group of 5/6 students, within strict guidelines, will navigate their way around Melbourne’s public transport system and visit locations in and around the city. At each of these sites they will be met by a teacher who will give them tasks to complete. The teacher will remain at this site until all groups have departed for their next destination.

The aims of this excursion are:
1. To give students first-hand experience in looking at and studying Melbourne.
2. For students to be able to:
   a) Work collaboratively in a group
   b) Organise themselves to meet at the beginning of the day to travel together
   c) Use public transport or walk to get to each destination
   d) Use their own initiative and make decisions if things don’t go to plan
In order to achieve these aims the students organise their own meeting and departure point for the morning. They will use public transport timetables to ensure they have allocated enough time to meet a teacher in the city at the beginning of the day.

**All students will require a myki** with sufficient credit prior to the excursion. The school will reimburse the cost of the day’s travel.

Each destination serves as a check-in point, where the group will be met by a teacher and given their next set of instructions. The teacher will answer any questions and provide assistance where required. Students and staff will be able to contact each other, via mobile phones, at any point during the excursion to address any issues that may arise. It is preferable that each group of students have more than one mobile phone in case they need to be contacted at any time. Students are not to use their phone with earphones at any point due to the potential for this to be a traffic hazard.

**Excursion Support Structure**
- Students must stay in groups at all times and are not to proceed to the city before all members have joined up.
- Any student who is sick or unable to go for the day must inform their group before their designated meeting time. If later than this, the school office must be called before 8:30am so that the staff on the excursion can be contacted. Students must remember they are a member of a group and the others’ ability to proceed relies on their care and prompt communication.
- Students will meet with staff at Flinders Street in the morning to cross check any issues.
- There will be numerous times throughout the day where students will check in with teachers at specific sites.
- Students need to be back at the railway stations from where they started by 4pm.

This is an exciting day for the students and is pivotal in their Year 9 studies, not only academically but also for their personal confidence and maturity. If you have any queries regarding this excursion, please feel free to contact us at school.

We are excited by the educational possibilities the innovative Open Village program offers and are pleased with the very high level of student engagement so far.

Thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement.

Yours truly,

*Sue de Pyle, Lance Peele, Jonny Wouters and Tim Wright*