

**26 AUGUST 2010**

Dear Parents

### **Building projects**

I'm sure that, like me, you have been watching the progress of our two building projects with eager anticipation. I can report that both are at least on schedule, with **the Hall** actually being somewhat ahead of where the builders had planned to be at this time. Internal work has been going on for some time, including the cladding of the interior of the main hall space, most of the windows are installed and the bricklaying is virtually complete. Included with this newsletter is a brochure showing a plan of the multi-purpose hall building and exactly what facilities it contains. As the brochure says, it will transform the life of the school and enable us to do so many things indoors that we can currently only do outside or off campus.

The new **classroom extension** is also well on track. All the concrete floor slabs and columns have been poured, despite some interference from our unusually wet winter, and the roof is being erected as I write. In some ways the classroom extension has attracted less attention than the hall, but it will also do a great deal to enhance the life of the school. We will no longer have any portable buildings and it will bring all parts of the Junior and Middle Schools into close proximity with each other.

On the same level as the main school office will be two new Grade 3 classrooms and two Grade 4 classrooms, surrounding a shared flexible learning area with a bank of computers and space for small group work, art and practical science activities. This layout will be mirrored on the floor above, with two Grade 5 rooms and two Grade 6 rooms around the central area and a connecting corridor to the existing Year 7 class bases, thus bringing the first three years of the Middle School close together for the first time.

I must gratefully acknowledge that the new classroom block is mainly funded

by our \$2 million grant from the Federal Government's "Building the Education Revolution" economic stimulus programme. The Hall is also partly funded by a Commonwealth capital grant of \$480,000. These investments have been crucial in enabling the school to undertake these vital developments. Contrary to the experience in some government schools, both projects are entirely within the control of the school and our architects, they are being built exactly to our specifications and represent excellent value for money.

### **Security and safety**

I am pleased to report that we have recently revised both our emergency evacuation plan and our lockdown procedure to ensure that both take account of the changes to our campus layout and facilities during the construction period. Practices of each procedure have recently been carried out. Both proved highly effective and successful. Of course we hope that we never have to implement these measures in a real emergency, but I can assure you that we are well prepared if such a need should eventuate.

### **Planning ahead**

Work is now well under way on planning our programmes, staffing and funding for 2011. Senior School students are currently finalising their subject selections for next year, with careful guidance from the Year Co-ordinators, Careers staff and our Director of Teaching and Learning, Mark Stanton. Budgetary planning is also well advanced.

Taking a longer-term view, we are currently finalising our strategic priorities for the next 5 years and beyond, in drawing up our new **Strategic Development Plan**. 2010

marks something of a watershed for Alphington Grammar, with the effective completion of all the major targets in our existing campus Master Plan and the implementation of our new Senior Leadership structure, with the new positions of Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of Students Services and Staff Well-Being.

The Strategic Plan is identifying desirable goals in eight priority development areas:

1. Mission, Vision & Values
2. Governance
3. Management & Staffing
4. Teaching & Learning/Student Achievement
5. Capital Works/Campus Development
6. School Promotion & Enrolments
7. Students & Families
8. Curriculum – Scope & Development

This work is being led by members of the Senior Management Team, in conjunction with the School Council. It is taking into account views expressed by parents (in the recent parent satisfaction survey), staff and students. I would hope to have a summary of strategic planning goals to present to the school community well before the end of this year. However it is already clear that the plan will incorporate significant changes to our Mission and Core Values statements, a major review of our curriculum programmes and our middle management structure, the development of a new campus Master Plan, and the setting of ambitious targets for student achievement.

### **Recent events**

Our students have distinguished themselves in many laudable ways of late. Among these have been:

- Gaining honours in our heat of the Tournament of Minds coming equal second in a field of 38 schools (Grades 5 and 6);
- Reaching the last eight schools in the state in Inter-School Debating (Year 9 team);
- Reaching Finals in Year 8/9 boys' soccer and Grade 5/6 softball, and

- Staging a wonderful performance in this year's Wakakirri Story – Dance competition (Grades 3+ 4)

Congratulations to all our students for their excellent efforts in these activities, which cover such a wide range of skills and pursuits.

#### **Traffic**

Once more I make a passionate plea to all parents to be extra careful when dropping off and picking up children from the school. In particular, please **DO NOT** encourage your children to run across the road to your car. Children should only cross Lucerne Crescent at the crossing, even if this involves a longer walk. Children darting out between cars to cross the road further down are taking a huge risk. **Please ensure that you insist that your children do not do this.**

With best wishes,

**Mike Smith**

## **DIARY OF EVENTS**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
Wed 1/9	Year 9 Metropolis; Y3/4 Gymnastics
Thu 2/9	PTA Father's Day Stall; EISM Representative Sport Fixtures vs Gippsland Independent Schools
Fri 3/9	Year 5/6 Gymnastics; Year 11 Formal
<b>Sun 5/9</b>	<b>Father's Day</b>
Mon 6/9	Y12 VCE Exams – Practice Week; Y7 Maths Games Day Excursion
Tue 7/9	Y2 Gymnastics
Wed 8/9	EISM Cross Country Championships; Y9 Metropolis; Y3/4 Gymnastics; Y6 Maths Games Day Excursion
Fri 10/9	Y5/6 Gymnastics
Mon 13/9	Y7 Sport vs Bialik College
Tue 14/9	Y2 Gymnastics
Wed 15/9	<b>Y9 Metropolis Presentation Night; Y3/4 Gymnastics</b>
<b>Fri 17/9</b>	<b>TERM 3 ENDS – STAFF &amp; STUDENTS; 5/6 Gymnastics</b>
<b>Mon 4/10</b>	<b>TERM 4 BEGINS – STAFF; VCE LOTE ORAL PERIOD begins</b>
<b>Tues 5/10</b>	<b>TERM 4 BEGINS – STUDENTS</b>
Wed 6/10	Y7 & 10 Immunisations; VAPA Concert
Thur 7/10	Y8/9 Sport vs Nunawading Adventist College
Mon 11/10	Y7 Sport vs Huntingtower School; Y8 Canberra Tour begins
Thu 14/10	Y8/9 Sport vs Plenty Valley Christian School; <b>Junior School Art Show</b>
Mon 18/10	Y7 Sport vs The Knox School
Wed 20/10	<b>Last day for Year 12 VCE students</b>
Thu 21/10	Y8/9 Sport vs Lilydale Adventist Academy; <b>VCE Valedictory Dinner</b>