Thanks to the hard work of many staff, contractors and students we are for the first time this year able to operate very close to our maximum capacity with normal classes in operation for all year levels since Tuesday. There should be no more interruptions to our learning program even though our library will not be back in full operation until the start of term two.

Parents and students will be aware that I have asked all teachers to consistently enforce the wearing of school uniform and including complying with our policy relating to facial piercings. Thank you to the vast majority of families who have worked with the school to ensure that our students are well presented and complying with school expectations. I have received a significant number of requests to change the uniform policy to allow small clear studs to be worn. School council will discuss this issue at its February meeting.

Planning is also in place for those who may be thinking about enrolling at Western Heights College next year. Information sessions for 2017 Year 7 students are scheduled for Wednesday the 16th of March and Thursday the 17th. Tours of the college will be conducted on the Thursday or can be arranged to suit the needs of individual families. This is an opportunity for the wider community to visit the school and see how learning takes place at Western Height College.

This year the college has a new wellbeing office which is situated in the administration building next to the careers/MIPs office. This new office will be used by our wellbeing team and will house an array of information for our students and their families. Confidential meetings and discussions can now take place in a quiet and private environment.

During first term there are a number of information evenings where parents and prospective parents can learn more about our school. The first of these took place last Monday when approximately 150 Year 12 students and parents attended a BBQ and information session where the expectations of the year were explained. Next Tuesday there will be a BBQ and parent meeting for our Year 7 students. I encourage as many families as possible to attend this presentation which commences at 5.30pm.
OFF TO A FLYING START!
With the ‘wet weather’ and flooding now behind us, I would like to sincerely thank all parents, students and our team of teachers who worked together to see through a very challenging start for our Year 7 cohort. We learnt that we have a group of mature, respectful and resilient students by the way in which they responded to these challenges.

I am so privileged to be the Year 7 Learning Community Leader, with a wonderful cohort of students who have embraced our SOAR Matrix and are displaying significant positive behaviours. The staff working with your children are passionate and enthusiastic, ensuring that your child will get the best education possible.

I would like to thank all parents and guardians for their remarkable support and effort to ensure that all Year 7s are ‘ready to learn’ by ensuring our students are in correct school uniform, have all of their equipment including their planners and specific safety equipment required for some classes.

MENTOR MEETINGS:
A special thanks to parents/guardians for attending the Mentor Meetings with their child last Wednesday. All Mentor teachers found these meetings to be a great way to begin our strong connection with students and parents. Information discussed in these meetings has been invaluable in getting to know each student we teach and we are excited about your involvement in your child’s learning journey. We appreciate your support and welcome your input and involvement in future events.

ATTENDANCE:
‘Being here’ is essential to gain the maximum success from the programs we offer students and the Year 7 students have so far excelled in their attendance. Students have been very punctual to all classes. Congratulations to all students for this effort and we are confident this will continue.

PLANNERS:
The planner has been well received by parents and students. Staff will use the planner as the main communicator to keep parents informed. Students have already begun to list important dates and things they need to remember on a daily or weekly basis. Well done to all students on how well they have started using their planners and remembering to take their planner to every class they attend. Teachers are countersigning or stamping planners every Monday morning during Personal Learning.

CAMP NILLAHCOOTIE 2-4TH MARCH:
This camp provides students with the opportunity for students to mix in a number of formats, thus cultivating a larger social base for each student. Challenging and new experiences will highlight for each student the importance of the whole group functioning together for the camp to be successful. This will enhance students in their preparation for the rest of the year whereby they are required to work collaboratively together in SWAT subjects in mixed classes, in addition to their Mentor Group. Curriculum will be taught prior to and following the camp, with students being assessed on a variety of areas. We are expecting 100 per cent attendance on our Year 7 Camp. If you require support to ensure your child can attend camp, please contact your child’s Mentor Teacher who can certainly assist. Our College is more than happy to help out to ensure your child attends.

Ms Michelle Roth
Year 7 & 8 Learning Community Leader.

2017 YEAR 7 PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS:
This year our College will be holding two separate information sessions over two days for interested families who are looking at enrolling their child at our College for 2017.

Similar to last year, students will be front and centre leading tours, speaking to families and running many of the information displays teachers have prepared for the evening.

Student leaders from across all year levels will be expected to support these sessions in some capacity. Over the next few weeks teachers will be approaching a number of students to enlist their support.

We are looking forward to showcasing our wonderful College. If you have any further questions about these sessions please contact your child’s Learning Community Leader.

Mr Sachse
Transition Leader.

2017 Year 7 Parent Information Sessions

Wednesday 16 March 5.30pm
Information session followed by school tour

Thursday 17 March 9.15am
Information session followed by school tour
Hello, I am Luke Scott and I am a Year 7 teacher. I am also the Year 7 Learning Community Support (LCS) staff member. I support teachers and students in Year 7 at Western Heights College. It has been a great start to the year. So many happy faces early for class with all their equipment ready to start the day. It has been a little disruptive with the Year 7 building drying out since the rains, but the teachers and students took this in their strides. Students are already settling into routines and are living by the school expectations of S.O.A.R. (Safety, Organisation, Achievement and Respect). We have had our first two Year 7 assemblies and many students have had their names in the weekly raffle for being organised throughout the week and are winning canteen vouchers for their efforts.

The class DoJo system is now up and running. This is a rewards system that will track exceptional behaviors of S.O.A.R. and will result in extra activities for those who reach the level of S.O.A.R. ambassadorship. Letters will be sent home shortly with log on details so parents can monitor their child’s progress. Last year ambassadors went to Time Zone, Lazer Tag, Aerodrome and had inside milo days during winter. These rewards are chosen by students and this year’s activities will be chosen by the first students who get to 25 points.

As always, I encourage parents to share ask their child ‘what did they learn today’ and I am looking forward to see what achievements our year 7’s will accomplish this year.

Mr Luke Scott
Year 7 LCS

YEAR 8 – STARTING OFF WELL:
What an interesting start to 2016! Year 8 students have managed themselves extremely well, considering what has been asked of them so far – well done Year 8 students! However, we are very pleased to have returned ‘home’ to the blue building, having lockers and a space to call our own.

Part of the settling in process has been a refresher of the expectations as outlined in our SOAR, the WHC statement of beliefs by which our community works during the school day. All students will be well familiar with Safety, Organisation, Achievement and Respect, being reminded of these important expectations in our common language of learning across the curriculum and in our daily routines in the blue building and beyond. SOAR is also picked up through Personal Learning where relevant aspects, such as being organized and integrating PREP into weekly home routines, is explicitly taught.

In Year 8, PREP - Preparation for classes, should be formalized into a timetable integrating things such as sporting practice, music lessons or visits with friends. Maintaining a balance between school and home life is so important and in Personal Learning last week, students prepared a PREP timetable, taking into account all of their personal commitments during the week.
finding the equivalent of two hours a week in which to complete work not finished in class, continue ongoing tasks and revision of new learnings during that day. Students should aim to stick to their schedules to establish good habits which can only lead to greater success for them.

Finding a suitably quiet place to complete this work is important so that students are not distracted by things like the television or siblings.

Teachers love rewarding students for their achievements and we look forward to building on the good work started last year in Year 7, so that positive relationships can be built and amazing learning can happen. Students will continue to receive raffle tickets rewarding effort in the SOAR principles, DOJO points for above expected efforts and even exciting, surprise rewards for those reaching SOAR ambassador status. Bring on the raffle tickets and DOJO points now!!

Mrs Harrington
Year 8 LCS.

FAMILY TEAMWORK:
When students enjoy a transparent, honest and caring relationship with their families they are happy in themselves and approach their learning with growth mindsets. Their Relationship Optimism element of wellbeing is developing well. Having trust, clear and open communication lines between their parents and teachers provides a fertile and supportive environment in which students can strive, thrive and flourish.

We all need feedback on how are we travelling in order to make necessary adjustments in our lives and our students are no different. To build students self-awareness and ownership of their attitudes and behaviors they need regular developmental, non-judgmental feedback.

The adolescent brain is a turbulent place, with the good decision making center, the Pre-frontal Cortex, not completely wired up. As such, while they can create emotions just like adults they don’t yet have the capabilities to consistently control them. This often leads to any advice or feedback to be seen by them as criticism.

Building relationships is a two way street, which is sometimes quite a challenge with many teenagers preferring a one way street, my way or the highway. To encourage them to think beyond me, myself and I, a beneficial exercise is to encourage them to do a self analysis of their emotional intelligence. In completing this they will have to reflect on their input into relationships with others. When a “Teamwork” approach is fostered at home, students tend to see their parents advice more as positives to adopt rather than something to resent and rebel against.

Wellbeing Team.

PERFORMANCE ART ACADEMY:
Students have made an impressive start to the year in the Performance Art Academy and have already made some new friends working with other year levels. We have utilised our amazing theatre space to participate in some ‘get-to-know-you’ activities, team building exercises and even some fun line dances. Aiming at building their confidence and comfort levels together in the space, students have made an impressive start and their efforts have indicated that we are going to have a fantastic year ahead with loads of fun, experiences and terrific performances! Students are also being fitted this week for their custom jackets which will hopefully be ready before the end of Term 1! Stay tuned for future updates and pictures!

Mrs Kerrie Hutchinson
Performance Art Academy Director.
Congratulations to Year 9 students who have settled into their new building and learning program. The teachers are impressed by the way students are embracing the challenges of the new term.

Term one bursting with Year 9 community activities and school learning activities. Next week is a big week with the swimming carnival on Wednesday and the Year 9’s starting the Geelong Territory Futures program on Thursday. Students are busy during the focus program Thursday preparing themselves for this exciting program. Later this term we have the Athletics carnival and a production for students of ‘Love Drunk’ (more details to follow).

Parents and guardians are encouraged to make contact with Mentors regarding questions, clarifications and supports for their students. Mentor email addresses have been given during mentor meetings week one and are available through the Administration Centre.

Physical Education is timetabled for Tuesday for all Year 9 students, a morning and afternoon session. Students may wear their correct P.E. uniform to and from school. Leggings may be worn during the P.E. double only. During term one there is an athletics and a cross country focus so students are required to wear sturdy lace up runners or cross trainers please. It is a good idea for students to bring a water bottle, hat and sunscreen for these classes.

Have a fantastic term

Mr Roger Conron
Year 9 Learning Community Leader.

YEAR 9 LITERACY:
Our Year 9 students have started the Literature Circles program and will have a double session of Literature Circles every week - on Monday for 9D/E and on Tuesday for 9A/B/C. They need to ensure that they are up-to-date with their novel reading and analysis work by completing unfinished tasks for PREP. We encourage them to read a range of texts to develop their vocabulary and to enhance their knowledge of the world around them.

Language PREP sheets will be issued every Friday during the single language session and these sheets must be completed and submitted the following week. A spelling test will be held every week based on the key words in the PREP sheet.

The focus for our weekly double session of Writing Workshops every Wednesday this term is Imaginative Writing.

Mrs Rarotoga Deo
Literacy Teacher.

SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH:
The Science Talent Search is run each year by the Science Teachers’ Association of Victoria (STAV). The STS theme for 2016 is ‘Drones, Droids and Robots’. There are primary and secondary school sections in each category. (STS) Science Talent Search was founded in 1952, making it one of the longest running programs of its type in the world!

The online 2014 registration opens on Monday 29 February and entry registration closes Monday 30 May. Students in Year 7 to Year 12 can enter any of the following sections: Creative Writing, Working Models, Inventions, Poster - Scientific Wall charts, Games, Computer Programs – Games and Simulations, Science Photography, Video Productions (DVD), and Experimental Research. Entries need to be mailed to arrive in Melbourne by 21st July or in some cases can be brought to Melbourne on Judging Day, 6 August.

WHC Students have won the major bursary in three intermediate categories in 2013 and in 2014. Any student who is interested in entering any category in the Science Talent Search 2016 should speak to their Science teachers. Students can choose their own topic within or outside the theme. They can work on their own or with a friend. In sections such as Experimental Research, Inventions, Working Models and Games, students should start thinking about their topics and talk to their teachers now. Sometimes it is good to get results for the Experimental Research project over an extended period of time.

Science Talent Search also has a partnership with the national BHP Billiton Science Awards. Students wishing to enter the BHP Billiton Science Awards must register for Science Talent Search in the Experimental Research and/or Inventions Sections.

For further information please refer to the online STS Handbook.

Ms June George
Science Teacher.

FRENCH WORK BOOKS
The Year 7, 8 & 9 French Workbooks are now in the College and can be purchased from the office for $20.00
The Year 10 staff welcome our students and families to what will be a fantastic year. Our year has started with a few challenges due to the weather but our Year 10 students have worked and supported one another through this process.

Our Year 10 students are the first lot of students to complete the slate changeover. The slates are in the process of being handed out.

Students have had the opportunity to complete their first VCE subject for their schooling life, while 30 of our Year 10 students began their VET taster course at the Geelong Trade Training Centre. From the conversations that I have had with these students, they really enjoyed their first class.

I would like to draw attention to all Year 10 students and families that all Year 10 students will complete a week of work experience in August this year. I would suggest to all Year 10 students to start to think about possible places to complete this.

All the Year 10 staff are excited about the fantastic year ahead of us. We wish all students the greatest success in their learning this year.

Mr Dean Greenhalgh
Year 10 Learning Community Leader.

Firstly, I would like to welcome all of the Year 11 students back to Vines for the 2016 school year. I would especially like to welcome our new students joining us at Western Heights. This year as a Year 11 Learning Community we have taken over the RED building as our home base – which I am sure is a welcome change from the DAT for our students.

I also need to comment on how well our students have begun this year. I have been extremely pleased with the enthusiasm and willingness in which they have thrown themselves into their work. This has been echoed in several conversations I have had with teachers of Year 11 studies. This has been especially the case considering the testing start to the year due to the storm!

This year, our Year 11 team consists of some very experienced staff both teaching and acting as student mentors in Marli McCarthy, Brenna Loes, Leanne Jemmett, Zane McKeon, Marie Luckman, Nathan Feldman and Fraser Pilkington. I especially would like to welcome Fraser into his first year as a teacher in the Arts department. He joins us after using his talents in the Media Industry. Nathan also returns to WHC from a two year stint working for the department and he has taken over the running of the Year 11 VCAL component of our course. Marli and Brenna also take over the role of LCS for our community.

A big thank you must also go out to parents for supporting our push to ensure the uniform code for the college is adhered to. I realise that this can lead to some financial hardship and push back from the kids relating to this. However, the improvement has been considerably noticeable for the 11’s over the past weeks.

As the year progresses, a range of things will and do pop up that can heighten the stresses that can be felt by students as they complete their VCE/VCAL. If you have any concerns, feel free to ask your child’s mentor any questions you might have regarding your child’s schooling and I urge you to contact them if you have any concerns.

For VCAL students, we have arranged a 4 day program to ensure students have Friday’s available for work placements etc. without impacting their program. For VCE students there are a few changes to their program as well that they encounter as they enter VCE. Firstly, we have the 90% attendance expectation for VCAL and VCE. Students who fail to meet this requirement for individual subjects without a valid reason can fail said on the attendance. Students who are away due to illness etc. should obtain either a Doctors certificate or Stat Dec stating they are unable to attend. These days WILL NOT be counted as an unexplained absence, as we do understand students can get ill and things can pop up making it hard for someone to attend every day.

Also on their timetables Year 11 students will encounter Tutorial and IRP sessions.

PERMISSION FORMS AND PAYMENTS

Please note that all sport/excursion permission forms and payments are to be returned to the college two days before an activity.

For planning purposes it is important that this request is met to ensure students do not miss out on these valuable experiences.
TUTORIAL CLASSES

- The aim of these sessions is to develop the abilities of our Year 11 students to work as effective and independent VCE students and to develop the habits of successful learners. Held each **Tuesday afternoon** and **Friday sessions 3/4** in the learning space.
- Students spend this 100 minute block completing their choice of the work required for their other studies.
- Each student has also been assigned at least one Tutorial Teacher during these sessions.
- The Tutorial Teacher is present to provide support and guidance to the students during these sessions.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND PREPARATION (IRP) SESSIONS:

- This is the 100 minute session held in the opposite day to the students’ tutorial session.
- Students are not directly supervised during these sessions.
- Students who live close to WHC are allowed to go to home. Students who catch a bus home from Vines Rd must remain at the college until 3:20. This is aligned with WHC policy for study sessions in Year 12.
- Students in Year 11 will only have ONE I.R.P. session per week.
- Wednesday VET students also have an IRP session at the start of Fridays.

I look forward to an exciting year as our 11’s begin the first steps in obtaining their VCE or VCAL certificates.

Mr Brett Bullock
Year 11 Learning Community Leader.

WELCOME:

All our Year 12 students are to be congratulated on the way they have begun the school year. They are very settled and are working effectively, there is a real feeling of calm and purpose amongst the student population. It is also noteworthy that the majority of our students are wearing our College uniform with pride and are responding positively to our focus on this.

YEAR 12 INFORMATION EVENING:

Last Monday evening we hosted the Year 12 Information Evening. This was a great success with parents students and staff having the opportunity to mingle whilst enjoying light refreshments and finger food. This was followed by a formal presentation, mentor meetings and presentation of the Year 12 jumpers. Thank you to all those who were involved in the organization of the event.

LEARNING RESOURCES:

A number of external organisations provide Year 12 students resources and workshops aimed at maximizing their learning. Many of these encourage you to subscribe, and then forward you information on an ongoing basis. I encourage you to go to the following information to get further details:


YEAR 12 FOCUS DAY:

Year 12 students travelled to Deakin University Waurn Ponds campus for Focus Day. The students participated in a range of activities including lectures, workshops and team building activities. Paul Newitt from Deakin University’s marketing team was instrumental in the organization of this event and I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank him. A range of external organisations facilitated workshops, these included Elevate Education, Federation University and Victorian Group Training Company, we are very appreciative of their support. Thank you also to the Year 12 team who organized and supported this event.

YEAR 12 JUMPERS:

A second order of Year 12 jumpers will be finalized on Friday February 12th. Students wishing to order should do so at the College Office.

Ms Kerrie Hammond
Year 12 Learning Community Leader.

COLLEGE SWIMMING CARNIVAL
WEDNESDAY
17 FEBRUARY
KARDINIA POOL
Welcome back I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and has re-energized their batteries for a big 2016 school year. Classes are back in full swing after the flooding of the Year 8 building and all students are back hitting the books hard.

The Student Wellbeing Team has been very busy and this is a great opportunity to introduce the team to our school community.

- **Ali Henry** will work with students in Years 10, 11 and 12.
- **Jan Bowes** will work with students in Years 7, 8 and 9
- **Lisa Cooper** (Health Promotions Nurse) will look after student health days and work across the college to support staff and students

In 2016 we will be continuing our partnership with Services Connect. This is a wonderful organization that works with families in our school community to connect them with agencies that can support families in many different ways. If you think that this service may be able to help. Please contact the college and ask to speak to Mr Rogers.

**TALK DON'T TELL:**

For whatever reason the humanity in all of us doesn’t enjoy being told what to do. Of course as we get older we are given way more freedom of choice and may even suspect that no-one ever tells us what to do – apart from our boss at work, and the policeman that pulls us over, and the tax man when he asks for the forms etc. Just because someone has the power over us to make us do things doesn’t necessarily mean we enjoy it or that we are motivated to do it.

That’s why it is better to talk to your child about the issue rather than tell them what to do. As most parents soon realise telling their child doesn’t necessarily mean that it gets done anyway. Even if they do actually complete they task they may well do it resentfully and establish a negative mindset and pattern that will cause them to stumble in the future when needing to do the same thing again.

The art is to involve them in a discussion and encouraging them to create the solution and to make it one that will work time and time again.

An example would be doing homework. If you find that you get into the pattern of having to remind [nag] them every night then it just creates an atmosphere for conflict. Homework becomes your responsibility rather than theirs and even if you persuade them to do it tonight you must know that the routine will be the same again tomorrow night. Instead why not talk to them about the fact you need to nag them every night makes you uncomfortable and that you are motivated by their best interests. See if they can get to the point of seeing that doing their homework is the best for them – it will eliminate school pressure, the teacher will think positively, their grades will be better, their job will pay more money – you get the idea.

Then help them set up a system that will remind [nag] them rather than you.

Try a schedule that includes plenty of relaxing and chilling time, room for TV and dinner, but set times where homework is done. That schedule then becomes the policeman not you.

Written by Nigel Lane. www.nigellane.com.au
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**CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)**

CSEF will be provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities.

**How to Apply:**

Application forms are available from the college office or download from:


**Closing Date:**

You should lodge a CSEF application form at the college by 3 June, 2016.
SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS:
Each year at this time parents and Education Department employees have the opportunity of nominating to be members of our school council.

This year there are five vacant positions, three for parents and two for education Department employees. All of these vacancies have a two year tenure which will commence in March. There are usually two school council meetings each term. A formal call for nominations is included in this newsletter.

If you are interested and require additional information please contact me at the school. Nomination forms are available from the school office commencing today. Nominations will close on Friday the 26th of February at 4.00pm.

Ralph Shaw
Acting Principal.
Schedule 4: Notice of Election and Call for Nominations

An election to be conducted for members of the School Council of

______________________________

No candidate shall be elected from the school unless he/she has completed

[26]: [26]/[16], liner, floor, etc,

[26]: [26]/[16], [26]/[16], [26]

Following the closing of nominations, a list of the nominees will be posted at the school. The terms of office, membership categories, and number of positions in each membership category are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY</th>
<th>TERM OF OFFICE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF POSITIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll to 26 [26]/16 [26]</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET/employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll to 26 [26]/16 [26]</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the number of nominations is less than the number of vacancies, nominations shall be offered and calling for further nominations will be treated as a position in a position at the school.

Principal.