I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everybody back to school and to the start of the 2010 school year. We look forward to 2010 with great anticipation as we settle into our new facilities at College Drive. It is great to be on one campus and to see all the students at assembly on Monday morning was outstanding. On behalf of the College Council and students, can I thank all those involved with the establishment and consolidation of Echuca College at College Drive.

Our Year 7 enrolment is up to 192 and as a consequence our largest cohort of students in the College. The College is also attracting enrolments at the senior end of the school, while many of last year’s senior students gained apprenticeships and traineeships over the holidays. Some students are still waiting on results from job applications and interviews. Echuca and district is providing a range of employment options for young people and this goes well for the future.

In mid January, the Class of 2009 had 63 students receive offers from universities and TAFE colleges. Of those who applied to do further study 63% received their first preference and 77% received either their first or second preference. Back in December, 24 of our students received ‘Early Offers’ universities in Victoria and NSW. Students are still receiving offers as universities work their way through their selection process well into February. Although our students have some great options in front of them, the hardest decision for many is whether to take a gap year or to move straight into further study. Mr Webb and Ms Roberts are available to help last year’s students with issues surrounding university selections and accommodation.

The arrival of our new group of Year 7 students marks the beginning of a new era in education at Echuca College. Most of our Year 7 students have had 12 months working on their ‘Netbook’ computers at primary school, as part of the Loddon Mallee Region’s pilot program. Teachers at the College have also been preparing for the arrival of 192 computers into their classrooms and believe that the ‘Netbook’ will be a very useful tool in the learning process that takes place in Year 7. Our eLearning Team will also be monitoring the effectiveness of the ‘Netbook’ program in relation to student learning and how it may be used across other year levels in the future. Students enrolling at Year 7 from non government schools have entered into the ‘Netbook’ program and have been issued with a computer, thus ensuring all students in Year 7 have access to a ‘Netbook’.

As I mentioned at the end of last year we have a number of new staff working across the College. I would like to welcome and introduce our new staff to our College community.

Mr. Ayres     Senior and Year 9 English
Mrs. Anderson  Senior Maths and Science
Mrs. Jenner    Mathematics
Ms. Stansfield Business Management and Wellbeing
Team Leader
Mr. Bubb      Maths and Physical Education
Mrs. Neale    Science
Mrs Kyne      Arts
Mrs Couchman  English and Health

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Welcome to all our new staff.

Echuca’s ‘Southern 80’ weekend is always a big event for our community. I would like to reinforce to all our students the need to act responsibly, be careful and to look out for your friends.

Chris Eeles
College Principal

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**E Learning News**

Students today live in a world where technology is everywhere. They grab a digital camera or mobile phone to take pictures, then Bluetooth these pictures to their laptops or PODs (Personal Owned Devices), then upload them to their blogs or FaceBook or MySpace. To communicate, they invite comments from their friends online. Students communicate via e-mail or Direct Message, Instant Message, Twitter or MSN. (There is a new term in the medical world, namely repetitive strain injury (RSI): An injury in the thumb of a young person due to texting all the time).

Young people know that you can cook using a microwave oven. They find information via the internet by reading online newspapers or Wikipedia, or more likely, they may just pose the question to their Personal Learning Network (PLN) across the world via a forum like Twitter, and within seconds, they will have information flowing back at them: True brainstorming, true synergy! By combining all the little bits of information, they are able to form a big picture of global proportions, as their picture was made up of bits of information from all over the world. For quiet relaxation, you can find them listening to music on an iPod. For a more action packed relaxation period, they may choose to play with Wii or go for video-gaming on Playstations or an X-Box. You may say that they are like a fish swimming in water, when it comes to using technology… …and for a fish, water is invisible. So it stands to reason that for most young people, technology is invisible. They just use it as part of their everyday life, it is not even second nature to them, it IS their nature. It comes as natural as breathing.

Even for those students that don’t use technology a lot, it will become important to learn how to use it responsibly, as the world is changing very quickly, and will become more and more reliant on a work force that is technologically savvy.

Schools are moving to accommodate the E Learning needs of these young people. In Echuca College, we have a cohort of almost 200 Year 7 students, each with their own netbook. All other areas in the school will move towards having anytime, anywhere access to computers. It is an exciting time for all of us. Feel free to contact the school about any questions or concerns you may have regarding the E Learning happening at Echuca College.

Maryna Badenhurst E-Learning Co-ordinator

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**Year 7 News.**

Welcome to all our new students and families.

Our Harrietville Camp will be on the 17th, 18th and 19th of February. This camp will allow students and staff the opportunity to get to know each other whilst having a lot of fun. If there are any concerns please contact Scott Trewhella or myself. We really would like all students to attend.

All students have an Echuca College work planner. We encourage you to read through the information at the start of this with your student. On page 16 and 17 there are some agreements that you need to be aware of and sign. Tutorial teachers will need to sight these.

Tracey Burton.

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**Year 11 News– These are the Days of Our Lives**

The Year 11 students have had an impressive start to the academic year. The ‘Step Up’ program was extremely successful and clearly a strong work ethic was prevalent among the students. Congratulations to all participants.

Welcome to the Year 11 team for 2010. Mr Ted Down – Team Leader, Mr Sutton – Assistant team leader and Miss Watson – Assistant team leader. Our tutorial teachers are Miss Foy, Mr Duffy, Mr Finn, Mrs Watson, Mr Mitchell, Miss Menz and Ms Anderson. We are all here to assist students towards a smooth transition into their VCE studies and wellbeing.

There are many exciting times to look forward to this year, including the Year 11 camp, Echuca College Debutant Ball, Rock Eisteddfod (traditionally with Year 11 Leaders) and the Peer Support program involving positive initiatives with Year 7 students.

We look forward to a busy year ahead and encourage students to call in and talk to us about their achievements, aspirations and any problems which may arise.

PS. Study tip: Regularly update your College planner with home study information.
Year 9 News

Welcome back for another busy year at Echuca College. This year’s Year 9 Team consists of Team Leader, Carlie Jones and Assistant Team Leaders, Dan Davidson and Stewart Cheal. The team is looking forward to getting to know all the students and their families as quickly as possible.

This year, the Year 9 Team is implementing a student reward/incentive program. Any student demonstrating personal best effort, leadership and academic excellence is provided with a stamp/sticker that is placed in the student’s diary. Upon the student earning 10 stickers, they are able to exchange them for a canteen voucher reward. In addition, the student is entered into an end of term draw for a substantial shopping voucher. The program aims to challenge and reward students for their efforts. I hope that together we can promote this program amongst the students.

Last Sunday our six School for Leadership representative started their adventure at the Alpine Campus in Dinner Plain. On behalf of the College, we wish Milly Down, Maddy Steel, Ellie Denson, Jayden Twigg, Tyler Lethlean and Brent McGrath all the best for their fun filled term in the mountains. We look forward to keeping you updated on their progress through the newsletter.

Summer is definitely upon us and with it comes the need for students to wear their broad brimmed hats in term 1. I encourage you to ensure that your student has a broad brimmed hat to complement their summer uniform. Students without hats will not be allowed outside for recess or lunch. Should you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact the College.

I am looking forward to meeting all parents and guardians as the year progresses. Here’s to an exciting and rewarding year for all of the Year 9 student cohort.

Carlie Jones
Year 9 Team Leader

Turkey 2010

Students from Echuca College will be travelling to Turkey in the September school holidays. The trip will focus on the history of Turkey, culminating in a visit to Gallipoli. Presently there are still a couple of places available for students who wish to attend. There will be a parent information night in the next couple of weeks; keep an eye on the newsletter for the date and time. Contact Ms Case, in year 7, for more information.

MALAYSIA DECEMBER 2009

From Monday the 7th of December to Tuesday the 15th of December, two parents, seven Echuca College students and I, flew to the hot, humid island of Malaysia. We were exposed to a culture where bargaining is the norm; all of us eventually trying our skills and coming away with some great discounts. We visited numerous places including an elephant sanctuary, where we were able to feed, ride and bath with the elephants. The Batu caves was another highlight and was well worth the 200 odd steps climbed to reach it. It was a fantastic opportunity for students to experience the culture of a country much like Indonesia and take their experiences back to their Indonesian studies. I believe all had a rewarding experience and everyone has taken something from the trip, whether it be realising they are a natural at bargaining or simply understanding how people from other countries might feel when they come to Australia for the first time.

I would like to thank Kelsea Chapman, Jade Crumpton, Jodie West, Stephanie Pearse, Rhiannon Lloyd, Krystelle Lloyd and Jessica Mitchell for their outstanding attitude and behaviour. All students conducted themselves as mature young adults and proudly represented our College. I would also like to thank Joy Mitchell and Margi Smith, our two parents, who were a fantastic support to me and the students. I could not have done it without them. They were always there to lend a hand and I cannot express my gratitude enough.

A big thank you must also go to all staff who assisted me in organising this tour and keep posted for Malaysia 2011!

Bu Peters
My child has an infection. Can my child go to school?

Yes. Infections are not usually a reason to keep your child away from school. However, if your child is sick, make sure they are well before sending them to school.

What can I expect from the school?

Schools are responsible for ensuring a safe environment. They will communicate with you if there are any concerns about your child. They will also provide support and resources to help your child.

What if my child is involved in a program?

If your child is involved in a program, they should follow the guidelines of that program. This may include wearing uniforms or following specific rules.

What if my child refuses to go to school or is refusing to do any work?

If your child is refusing to go to school, try to talk to them and see if there is anything that is bothering them. If they are still refusing, you may need to contact the school for further assistance.

What can I do if my child is absent?

If your child is absent, make sure to communicate with the school. They will be able to provide you with information about your child's progress and any work they may have missed.

Do I need to let the school know if my child is away from school?

Yes. It is important to inform the school when your child is absent. This helps the school to keep track of their attendance and progress.

Is regular attendance at school important?

Yes. Regular attendance is important for your child's education. It helps them to stay on track and achieve their goals.

If my child has been away, can I pick up the child early after school?

Yes. If it is urgent, you can pick up the child early. However, it is important to inform the school in advance so they can make arrangements.

What if my child is absent because of illness?

If your child is absent because of illness, try to make sure they are well before sending them back to school. They should be free of fever and have no other symptoms before returning to school.

School policies and procedures can vary, so it is important to communicate with your child's school and understand their specific policies.