Important Dates

22nd - 25th March
Year 12 Outdoor Ed Canoeing Trip.

26th March - Last day of Term 1
2:30 pm finish.

April:
12th - Start Term 2
15th - VSSA Swimming Carnival
21st - Northern Zone Summer Sports day.
26th ANZAC day
Public holiday.

May:
11th, 12th and 13th
Year 7 & 9 NAPLAN Testing.

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Principal’s Report

‘Diversity Our Strength’

As we complete a very short term one, I would like to congratulate students, staff and the Echuca College community on a wonderful start to the year. During the term we have seen our students achieve in a number of areas within the College, the local community and across the state. Students have taken up leadership roles at the College as College Captains, Community Leaders and in our new Student Leadership Team. As mentioned in our last Newsletter our ‘Peer Support’ program (Year 11 mentors for Year 7 students) has been a great success and I would like to acknowledge the great work of our Year 11 students and Mrs Case.

We have not had our usual Parent/Teacher interviews that are normally held in week 10 of Term 1 but we are instead proposing that in week 1 of Term 2 to hold ‘Learning Chats’.

During the first week of Term 2, specifically on the 14th and 15th of April we will be holding “Learning Chats”. These chats are designed to assist Tutorial Teachers in learning more about the students in their tutorial group so they are in a better position to support them throughout the year. At previous parent/teacher interviews it has been teachers who have informed parents about the student’s progress in their classes. However, we now want to hear from you – what can you tell us about your child to assist us in making their year at Echuca College as beneficial as possible.

We are interested to learn about:

Your child’s interests

Your child’s strengths and weaknesses – previous year’s performance – any areas of difficulty

Your child’s goals for this year

How your child has settled into the new school year academically (homework and home study routines, subject selection etc) and socially.

“Learning Chats” are different from the traditional parent/teacher interviews. At traditional interviews we have passed on the information to you. However, the “Learning Chat” is designed for YOU to pass on information to us. The “Learning Chats” will be held on Wednesday and Thursday after school between 4:30pm and 7pm. We anticipate that each chat will last approximately 10 minutes. You will only need to see the Tutorial Teacher but if contact with another teacher is needed, the Tutorial Teacher will pass this information. Your child will make a time with their Tutorial Teacher on the appointment schedule. Please let them know your preferred time by completing the tear off form that has been sent home. Our Year Level Team Leaders have worked with their Assistant Team Leaders to identify those students who are at risk in several areas. Parents of these students will receive a letter requesting an appointment to attend an interview with the Team Leader or Assistant Team Leader on the night of the 14th and 15th.
Next term will see CSIRO’s ‘Science in Schools’ program start at Echuca College. We have two scientists visiting and working with our students in the areas of Agriculture and Biology. Ms Miccela Main is an agricultural research scientist at the Arthur Rilar Institute in Melbourne and Mr. Neil McLeod is also a research scientist with DSE at Tatura. We look forward to having both these scientists in our college and I’m sure students and staff will benefit greatly from the experience.

Earlier in the week Ms Peters took a group of students to the Bar-Rook Field and Game shoot at Barham. I would like to congratulate the students that attended the day, on an outstanding performance. Results are on Page 6 of this newsletter.

College Council will hold its AGM on the 22nd of March and it will be my pleasure to table the College’s Annual Report and Annual Implementation Plan for review. Members of the community are also welcome to obtain a copy of these reports on request at the General Office. Our Annual Report reflects on the previous year and AIP sets out our goals, targets and strategies for the coming year. At the Council meeting that will follow the AGM, we will welcome new parent and DEECD members to Council. We look forward to a very positive year at College Council with many major projects still to be completed.

There is still a vacancy for a parent representative on School Council. If you are interested please contact the school office for a nomination form. Closing date Monday 22nd March at 4pm.

Who is on the school council?
There are three possible categories of membership:
• A mandated elected Parent category. More than one third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education (DEECD) employees can be Parent members at their child’s school.
• A mandated elected DEECD employee category. Members of this category may make up no more than one third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
• An optional Community member category. Its members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DEECD employees are not eligible to be Community members.

The term of office for members is two years. Half the members must retire each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

Chris Eeles.

**Swine Flu Vaccine**

The Department of Health advises that a FREE vaccine to protect against the H1N1 Influenza 2009 (Swine Flu) is still available.

**Who should have the Swine Flu Vaccine?**
Adults and children older than 6 months are encouraged to have the vaccinated. Some people are more likely to become seriously ill from swine flu. Even if you are fit and well, you are at risk of serious illness and infecting others.

The vaccine is FREE and available at your local health service or doctor. (Note: doctors may charge a consultation fee).

Need more information? For further in formation visit http://humanswineflu.health.vic.gov.au

For vaccination enquiries call: 1300 882 008.

**Debutante Ball**

On Wednesday 10th March 2010 we called a meeting of interested parents that would like to be on the organising committee for this year’s Deb Ball.

Unfortunately we only had 2 very enthusiastic Mum’s turn up to the meeting. With over 70 Year 11 girls indicating they would like to do their Deb, there is no way we will be able to organise a Deb Ball with only 2 parents.

If we do not get any more parents involved in the committee the Deb Ball will not run for 2010.

Once again if there any parents interested in being on the organising committee could they please contact me or Ted Down (Year 11 Team Leader) at the College anytime. A decision will need to be made by School Council before the end of this term.
CSSA Swimming Sports Report

On Monday the 1st of March, the CSSSA Swimming Sports were held in Nathalia. After a few initial complaints about the ‘cooler weather’, an elite team of 38 Echuca College students boarded the bus and safely made it to the Nathalia outdoor swimming pool. After sussing out the competition, Echuca set up camp and got down to business. The first race began on a very positive note with Brock Norwood snatching the first victory of the day. The Keech boys followed and put on an effortless show, as did the junior brigade, with impressive swims by Corey McGrath, Emily Begley, Isabella Reid, Tessa Mellington and Greta Pearson. We also had some relay specialists come along to show their expertise in the team events; they were; Mardi-Lee Hutchins, Mikayla Todd, Bridget Bedford, Rochelle Daley, Ryan Pentreath and Josh Preston.

We had a number of special efforts on the day and worthwhile mentions must go out to the following students; Bella Reid, who had sustained a nasty foot injury from a spider bite in the week leading up to the competition. Despite feeling under the weather from Swim Carnivals held on the weekend and having a foot that looked as if it might fall off at any stage, she pushed through 5 individual events and 2 winning relay events. Even with an injury, she still managed to represent Echuca College in every race possible. Well done Bella!

Brad Mellington. Brad has never won his age group champion at CSSSA level, despite being a fantastic athlete and fierce competitor. After years of trying, he again turned up to represent the College and ended up winning all 5 of the individual events he competed in and also won 2 relays. Great work Brad!

Finally, to Isaac Duffy. Isaac represented Echuca College in the disability events and managed to earn himself first place ribbons in each of the 50m Freestyle, Breastroke and Backstroke events. He had the crowd on their feet and completed every race with a smile on his face. A fantastic effort Isaac!

At the end of the day, Echuca College just fell short in the points tally, losing out to Rochester who won on points gained in the relays. Individually though, Echuca College had 5 age group champions and won a whopping 38 events on the day!

**Age Group Champions were:**
- U13 Boys Champion – Corey McGrath
- U13 Girls Champion – Isabella Reid
- U14 Girls Champion – Tessa Mellington
- U16 Boys Champion – Bryce Keech
- U17 Boys Champion – Brad Mellington and Brock Norwood

Congratulations to the Age Group Champions and to everyone who attended and competed on the day. We were also very lucky to have several parents turn up to support us, so thank you very much for your help! In summary, it was a fantastic day and all Echuca College students displayed a positive attitude and excellent sportsmanship at all times. As teachers, it was a pleasure to take such a great group of young people to an Interschool competition. Everyone competed admirably and regardless of whether they won or not, gave it their best. This is what it is all about!

Regards, Mr Sanders, Miss Foy and Miss McGurk

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**Year 8 News**

We have been learning about Astronomy in Science. In Humanities we are doing a project on Asia Pacific with a focus on environmental issues, we have chosen the type of project we want to research and present. In Maths we have been studying Number and will be doing a test soon. In English we have finished reading Lockie Leonard and are writing extended text responses.

Visual Arts and Fabrics have been fun because we are doing graffiti and tie-dye.

Congratulations to Adam Scott and Tessa Mellington for getting the student representative positions.

Jess Bernaldo and Leah Nimmo
From the Yr8 Team.
What is Ultranet?

In the coming months, a new initiative will be rolled out across the state, called the Ultranet. Eventually, all schools will be part of the Ultranet, and it will become part and parcel of how teachers report to parents. The following information has been released by the Department of Education about the Ultranet:

What is the Ultranet?

The Ultranet is an online learning environment which will support high quality learning and teaching, and connect students, parents, teachers and school administrators, anywhere, anytime.

What is the focus of the Ultranet?

The Ultranet focuses on the key priorities of teaching and learning and a parent portal.

Why have an Ultranet?

To prepare students for the innovation and knowledge economy of the 21st century, schools must provide students with access to ICT environments that increase their participation, engagement and achievement in education. The education system faces irrelevance unless it recognises and minimises the gap between how students live and learn in the digital and multi-media world. Progressive and effective integration of ICT into education planning and delivery is needed. Schools will be supported to achieve this goal through the implementation of the Ultranet.

The Ultranet is designed to:

- Enable parents to become full partners in their child’s education, giving them 24 hour online access to their child’s homework, attendance, assessment, curriculum and teacher feedback at any time. All student outcomes and data will be secure and password protected, with several layers of security and encryptions to ensure the safety of student information.
- Ensure that every child will have a complete record of achievement across all years of schooling. Students will get a number when they enrol in Prep, and will keep that number regardless of the school they attend. This means that their progress across year levels can be viewed by teachers, which will enable a comprehensive picture to be formed about the student.
- Give students their own online workspaces, personally tailored education programs, direct feedback from teachers and better access to curriculum.
- Curriculum will be available online. This will enable students in remote schools to access specialised curriculum and podcast classes from schools that excel in various subject areas.
- Allow students to learn in an environment that will ensure that they have the cutting edge ICT skills they will need to in the 21st century workforce.
- Reduce the administrative burden for teachers and schools by using the Ultranet for recording attendance, school reports, timetabling and school events, to pool schools’ resources and give teachers access to a vast central database of classroom resources.

Will the Ultranet operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

The Ultranet will be available online anywhere, anytime. The Ultranet will be available during and outside regular school hours, on weekends and school holidays. Within this, there will be reasonable allowances for downtime to manage maintenance and other outages.
Term 1 has been buzzing with students making a great start to their VCE studies. Congratulations to the 60 students who were involved in the Peer Support program. It was rewarding for both Year 7 and 11 students and many friendships and fond memories were made.

**PERSONAL LEARNING GOALS**
In preparation for writing the Year 11 Personal Learning Goals (PLG’s), students have been reviewing their previous PLG’s and taking the time to consider how these goals were achieved. We encourage students to focus on their new VCE goals and strategies, thinking carefully about their approach towards achieving a positive outcome for their studies and future endeavours. Lastly, we would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Easter.

**STUDY TIP**: Remember to keep a balance between rest and study during the holiday break. - The Year 11 Team.

**School for Leadership**
Mr Morgan received an exciting phone call last week with the School for Leadership’s Western Victoria campus (Gnurad -Gundidj Campus) having a further six places for Echuca College students in Term 3. This campus is located near Terang. Within the next week or so the Year 9 Team will begin to call for applicants to go in Term 3. Should you wish to find out more information, you can see Mr Morgan, Mr Strachan or Mrs Jones. You might also like to look at their website: http://www.gnurad-gundidj.vic.edu.au/.

**Skiers’ Success**
Congratulations to Will Groves and Brooke Reinke who both either won or placed in their events at the recent Robinvale ski races. Brooke and Will now only have the Mildura Classic to compete in over the Easter break.

**Year 9 Outdoor Ed**
Well done to the two Outdoor Ed classes on the creation of their new garden near the gym entrance – it looks fabulous! Any parents wishing to donate seedlings or cuttings please see Mr Trewhella or Mrs Jones.

**Incentive Program**
Congratulations to Chloe Shorland, Ashlee Shead, Kassidy Sellings and Connor Glanville who at the time of typing are the first nominees in the end of term rewards draw! Keep collecting those stickers!!

**Learning Chats**
The first week of Term 2 will see the College hold their first round of Learning Chats. Replacing the parent teacher interviews, the aim of these chats is to gain a stronger insight into the needs and interests of all students at Echuca College. A detailed letter will be posted home to all families. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the College.

The Year 9 Team

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**Year 11 News - These are the days of our lives**

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**Year 12 News**

It was fantastic to see parents, students and friends at the Year 12 BBQ on Wednesday evening. It is really important that we work together to build a supportive network for each student.

On Tuesday of next week, the Yr12 students have been invited to share morning tea with staff to further enhance this connection. Early next term - Friday April the 23rd all Yr 12 students will be travelling to Melbourne to attend Age VCE & Careers Expo. There will over 150 exhibitions of VCE subject seminars.

In the coming weeks we will also be trialing an SMS message service - so you may receive a text message from the school in regards to events or your students absence from school. Replies to this service will be logged and recorded. Thank you and Happy Easter! - from the Yr12 Team.
The Age VCE and Careers Expo
The Age VCE and Careers Expo will take place at Caulfield Racecourse from Friday the 23rd of April to Sunday the 25th of April. This event includes more than 150 exhibitors and a range of VCE lectures. More information including a list of exhibitors can be found at www.education.theage.com.au. A limited number of free entry tickets are available from Mr Webb at the Careers/Pathways office.

Engineering Expo
An Engineering Expo will take place on Thursday the 25th of March at Etihad Stadium, Melbourne from 2pm to 7pm. This event includes over 60 exhibitors, free seminars and showcases the broad field of Engineering. The seminar is free but registration is required. For registration and more details go to www.engineeringexpo.org.au

University of Melbourne - Access All Areas
Melbourne University Parkville Campus is offering students and their parents an opportunity to visit the university. The invitation is open to students in years 10 to 12 and takes place on Friday the 9th of April, from 9am to 2pm. This opportunity is free but registration is required. For more information and registration visit www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/events/vic

University of Melbourne - Veterinary Science Open Day
The University of Melbourne Veterinary Science Open Day will take place on Sunday the 21st of March from 10 am to 3pm at the Veterinary Hospital in Werribee. For more information call (03) 83447844 or visit www.vet.unimelb.edu.au/openday

Pathways News

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Bar-Rook Field and Game shoot

Monday the 15th of March proved to be a fantastic day for the Echuca College shooting team. The weather was warm and the wind light at Bar-rook Field and Game Club; shooting scores more than doubling from last year for some of our competitors. Students had a challenging day with some new traps set up to test their shooting skills, coming home with three shields. It was another smooth and successful day from Brian and his team of workers.

A HUGE thank you is in order for our ever supportive parents, who accompany the students every year and help out with transporting our growing shooting team. Without you such opportunities would not exist.

Results were as follows:

1st Junior boys non-member: Jake Bullock
2nd Junior boys member: Shaun Spiers
1st Senior girls: Amanda Carrington
2nd Senior girls: Sarah McCluskey
1st Junior girls: Chloe Shorland
2nd Senior girls team: Chloe Shorland and Amanda Carrington
2nd Junior boys member team: Jake Bullock, Luke Hams and Tom McCluskey
Community Camps and Notices -

Junior Winter Basketball Season
Registrations now being taken. Forms available at www.echuca.basketball.net.au or call Echuca Basketball Association on 54806903. Registration evening held Monday April 12th from 4pm at Echuca Fonterra Centre. Season tips off week starting Monday April.

Flight Camp
Flight camp located in Bacchus Marsh at the Bacchus Marsh Aerodrome is a practical, hands on approach to exploring aviation in the school holidays!

The camp which runs for 5-7 residential days is for teenagers aged 15-19 wishing to explore the many facets of either a career in aviation as a pilot flying either fixed or rotary wing aircraft or flying for fun!

For more information about the camp’s costs, dates and conditions please visit www.flightcamp.com.au or all enquiries phone Wendy Dow on - 03 53 695162.

Echuca College BBQ
The students going to Turkey in September are holding a fundraiser BBQ at Safeway, Echuca on Saturday. Please show your support and buy a sausage.

Back to school Asthma Checklist
Back to school time presents a phenomenon called the ‘Back to School Spike’, which is a well-documented occurrence of an increase in asthma hospital admissions in children. This trend occurs two weeks after school goes back, with the spike generally occurring in mid to late February. Ensure your child with asthma is prepared for the new school year by following this simple back to school asthma checklist.

- Doctors Review
- Updated Asthma Action Plan (notify the school of any changes)
- Medication Review
- Preventer Medication Scripts
- Technique Review (good device technique will ensure more medication reaches the small airways)
- H1N1 Vaccination (a person suffering asthma has a greater risk of serious illness from influenza)
- School Asthma Action Plan returned Spacer (This needs to be updated at least annually)
- Blue Reliever Medication and your child is aware of their asthma triggers (expiry date of med)

For further information please contact School Nurse Denise Leed or the Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 645 130 or email advice@asthma.org.au