Principal’s Report

‘Diversity Our Strength’

This year Echuca College has participated in the ICT ‘Netbook’ trial at Year 7. All 193 students enrolled this year have had 24 hour access to a ‘netbook’ computer as part of the Loddon Mallee Region’s initiative. Over the last four months students have been able to use their netbooks across all learning domains to support their learning and the trial will continue until end of Year 8 for this cohort of students. As a consequence of the netbook trial, Echuca College will introduce a laptop program for students enrolling in Year 7 in 2011. As in the netbook program, students will have full access to the laptops and these computers will be allocated to the students until the end of Year 9. Echuca College already has a computer ratio better than 2 to 1 across the College in laptops/desktops access. With the introduction of the Ultranet later this year by DEECD, schools will need to have the computer hardware that will enable students to fully utilise this new approach to communication and learning. I will provide our community with more detail about the Ultranet and education in the 21st century in our next newsletter.

The NAPLAN tests for Year 7 and Year 9 students were held last week. The results of these tests provide diagnostic information for parents and teachers about a child’s performance in literacy and numeracy. This information can be used to support teaching and learning programs to improve student achievement. The report issued as a result of the tests will describe a child’s particular skills in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy. Parents will be have their student’s reports forwarded to them in August, while the data the College receives from the NAPLAN tests will be used to plan for the future learning needs of our students.

The examination period is only a fortnight away for students in Years 10, 11 and 12. Examinations for Year 10 students are on the 3rd / 4th June and Year 11 on the 7th / 9th June. Examinations for Unit Three VCE subjects start on the 8th June with Biology, Physics and Accounting followed by Psychology and Chemistry on the 9th June. These are the only VCAA subjects examined at our College at half year. On Thursday 10th June, all students studying a Unit 3&4 subject or 2nd Year of a Scored VET Certificate this year will be required to sit the General Achievement Test (GAT). Although we have some great new buildings we will struggle to accommodate our end of year examinations.

Next Monday evening the College will be holding a VCE and tertiary entrance information evening. The evening will commence at 7.00pm in the Senior Learning area and we encourage all students in Year 12 and their parents to attend. The College will provide information on the new ‘ATER’ (Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank) and how it is calculated, some background information on the upcoming examination period and also provide an opportunity for students and parents to ask questions relating to student progress this year.

Important Dates

May:
24th – 27th Yr 8 Rubicon Camp
24th May - CSSA Netball
- Beacon Real futures day

June:
1st CSSSA Winter Sports
Yr 10 Exams -
3rd and 4th June
VCE Yr 11 Exams -
Monday 7-9th June
8th June VCE Year 12 June Exams:
- Biology
- Physics
- Accounting
9th VCE Year 12 June Exams
- Psychology
- Chemistry
10th GAT VCE Exam
11th Report Writing Day
(no students)
14th Queens Birthday
23rd Yr 10 – “Keys Please”
Our Junior Debating Team won the final of the Echuca-Moama Apex Club Debating Competition last week. Our Junior Team consists of Whitney White, Teasha McInnes, Teagan Milne, Kayla Arkinstall (researcher) and Taylor Hamilton (researcher). Their topic for the debate was ‘The internet should be censored so that young people can be safer online.’ We successfully argued the affirmative cases and defeated the St Joseph’s team. This win signals a positive outlook for us with debating in the future. Special thanks must go to Mr Mark Bailey for his work with both senior and junior teams.

Echuca College is looking forward to some exciting excursions later this year. Continuing on from the success of the England cricket tour in 2008, 15 girls from the College will be going to New Zealand to play four soccer matches in the June/July holidays. This tour will be accompanied by four parents and staff and we hope will establish some great partnerships with New Zealand schools. In August, nine students and two teachers will complete the exchange program established in 2009 with our Chinese sister school, No.5 Middle School of Shangri-La County, Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. The students will be away for two weeks and will attend No 5 School plus experience a range of cultural activities organised by their hosts. There are still positions available on the exchange program. Our second tour is to Turkey. This tour has been organised as a result of Mrs Case travelling to Turkey last year as part of a Rotary program. Echuca College was also visited by a group of Turkish Rotarians and these events linked with our ‘Aussies at War’ history subject at Year 9 has resulted in this tour taking place in the September holidays. Echuca College is developing links with communities across the globe and we see these opportunities as important in developing our students as global citizens. Technology has brought communities across the world closer together but there is nothing better than experiencing the real thing.

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Year 8 News

On the 4th of May 2010, Year 8 classes 8T5, 6, 7 and 8 went to Kryal Castle in Ballarat. We went to gain information about how a castle may have been ran to further our studies of medieval times. While there we took part in 9 workshops throughout the day.

We worked with the staff and found they were very nice and carried out their medieval roles well. The outfits the staff wore were like those that had been worn in medieval times, like tunics and leather shoes.

The reconstruction of the castle was very detailed, the displays in the torture room were fantastic! The way the victims were tortured could be seen clearly by looking at them. We did workshops on the Black death, armoury, medieval music and dance, crime and punishment, the Magna Carta and the castles defences.

I thought the trip to Kryal Castle was worthwhile, and helped us to understand the roles of people in the medieval society.

By Jessica Bernaldo, Leah Nimmo and Molly Barber.
UK Cricket Tour 2012

A short note to the College community that the planned cricket tour to the UK in 2011, will happen definitely in June/July 2012. Our numbers for 2011 were only around 7, so we will be working hard to get some more students on board for 2012. We will be conducting a parent meeting in September this year to start the planning for 2012.

If there are any parents and students who would like to find out more please don’t hesitate to contact Karl Stenning at the College anytime.
Year 10 News

**Real Futures:** Next Monday the 24th of May all Year 10 students will go to the Fonterra Centre in Echuca for the Beacon "Real Futures" day. It is a chance to pick up information about a number of different career paths. It will run for periods 1 to 4 and students will return to the College for the afternoon classes.

**Year 10 Exams:** Students will sit exams on Thursday June 3rd and Friday June 4th in all their semester one subjects. The exams will be run in the Cafe Learning Area and the Senior Neighbourhood.

**Gold Coast Trip:** 44 students are very excited about the trip to be held in the last week of Term 3. A letter went home this week requesting a deposit of a minimum $50. An information evening will be held in Term 3 for students and parents.

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Echuca College’s Junior Debaters Win Apex Competition

Last week, the Echuca College community proudly watched as its junior debating team debated their way to victory over Saint Joseph’s in the newly created Echuca-Moama Apex Club Debating Competition.

Having defeated Moama Grammar in the first round, the three Echuca College debaters (Whitney White, Teasha McInnes and Tegan Milne), together with the help of their researchers (Kayla Arkinstall and Taylor Hamilton) captured the adjudicators’ hearts and minds, to convince the audience that: ‘the internet should be censored so that young people can be safer online’.

Whitney White began the debate well by clarifying the topic, identifying the ‘team split’ and then launching into a series of powerful arguments about the dangers of the Internet for young people. Through the quality of her arguments and her uncanny ability to deliver her speech with minimal use of notes, Whitney was able to make a strong connection with the audience and highlight the key problems faced by young people online today.

As the second speaker, Teasha McInnes (the youngest member of the team), demonstrated exactly why she was included in the team, with a strong rebuttal of the opposition’s arguments and an eloquent description of current censorship practices in Australia, and why these practices are so necessary.

The third speaker, Tegan Milne, clinched victory for Echuca College with her powerful and comprehensive rebuttal of the opposition’s arguments. Tegan went on to make excellent use of a variety of persuasive techniques, including several emotive anecdotes, to summarise the team’s case and ensure that this year’s perpetual trophy for the junior division would go to Echuca College.

This was an excellent start to the year for the debating students at Echuca College – showcasing the high level of skill and ability that these students possess and highlighting just some of the opportunities available to students at Echuca College. A special thanks needs to be made to Justin Stapleton and the Apex Club for providing this great opportunity for our students, as they now look forward to the next round of between-school debating with the Northern Rivers Debating competition, which begins in late July. Well done girls!

Mark Bailey
Echuca College Debating and Public Speaking Coordinator.

From left to right; Mark Bailey (debating co-ordinator), Teasha McInnes (second speaker), Teagan Milne (third speaker) and Whitney White (first speaker).
Careers/Pathways News:

Work Experience in Melbourne

A group of year 10 and 11 students participated in work experience in Melbourne. Students embraced this opportunity that turned out to be an excellent experience. We left for Melbourne on the V-line bus on Sunday the 2nd of May. We arrived at Claremont Guest House in South Yarra. Mr Webb and Miss Roberts accompanied the group throughout our week long journey and made life in the city a lot easier.

We stayed at the Claremont Guest House which is situated a block from the South Yarra train station which made travel convenient. Each student had to make their own way to work each day with the use of trains and trams. The teachers assisted us with travel but as the week progressed we became more independent. The variety of work experience from each student was very broad. We had architects to chefs and child care workers, these positions were found by our careers teachers. All of the work places were highly organised and had plenty of tasks for us to complete.

Eloise Clermont –Ferrand and I completed our work experience with the Beacon Foundation. We had a number of projects to work on throughout the week. We sat in on meetings, conducted interviews, visited other schools and businesses. The staff at Beacon were an inspiration to us both, and have widened our eyes on not only the city life but what is out there for us to explore. We had the opportunity to use our skills and developed many more skills that will complement us throughout the next few years when making career decisions.

Other than work experience Mr. Webb and Miss Roberts didn’t provide us with many other exciting activities. They only took us out for dinner, to the movies and up to the Eureka Sky Deck! The two ensured we were safe and we had an awesome time throughout the duration of the week. The opportunity was probably a one off experience for many of us and we are so glad we made the most of this life experience. Everyone that took up the opportunity had an absolute ball and strongly recommend the experience to younger students. We recommend any kind of work experience as it counts towards your career and can give you many ideas on what lies ahead.

Callum Taylor –Year 11

Career/Pathways Dates

The National Careers & Employment Expo
Friday May the 21st and Saturday May 22nd. At the Melbourne Exhibition & Convention Centre. For more information visit www.eocexpo.com.au

Year 12 Students
Undergraduate Medicine and Health Science Admission Test- UMAT
Year 12 students intending to apply for medicine or health sciences need to check if they need to sit the UMAT test. Student’s who are required to sit the test and don’t, won’t be considered for their course. A list of courses that require the test is displayed on the noticeboard in the Year 12 study Centre or can be found at www.umat.acer.edu.au. Registration closes on June the 4th. The test date is Wednesday 28th July.
LOCAL JUNIOR PRODUCTION

Echuca Musical Theatre Company Inc.
Production of:

Disney’s
Mulan JR!

Music and Lyrics by: Matthew Wilder and David Zippel
Stephen Schwartz, Jeanine Tesori and Alexa Junge.
Music Adapted and Arranged and Additional Music
and Lyrics by: Bryan Louiselle.
Book Adapted and Additional Lyrics by: Patricia Cotter
Based on the 1998 Disney film “Mulan” and the story
“Fa Mulan” by Robert D. San Souci.
By arrangement with Hal Leonard Australia Pty. Ltd.
Exclusive agent for Music Theatre International, NY.
Mulan Junior is a heart-warming celebration of culture,
honour, love and a fighting spirit.
There are plenty of female and male roles, so why not
come along to the Information Evening for school
students, parents and others interested in being in-
volved with this production.
All students must be accompanied by a parent/
guardian
When: 10th June, 2010, 7pm.
Where: EMTC Shed, Simmie St. Echuca.
Show dates: October 15th, 17th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th.

EXCHANGE STUDENTS IN NEED OF HOST FAMILIES

Expand your knowledge of other countries, cultures, languages and
cuisines and consider opening your door to an international exchange
student. World Education Program is looking for Volunteer Host
Families for International Students arriving in July 2010.
Full support is offered to all host families by National Office staff and
a local WEP representative from your community. An emergency
phone number is also provided.
For More Information on Exchange students and enquiries
Please contact:

Nikki Medwell
Inbound Exchange Administrator
World Education Program
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Fax: (03) 9598 4233   Email: nikkimedwell@wep.org.au