

## Principal News

On Tuesday night this week we held our long planned Community Meeting at which our School Council President, Dr Helen Marshall, presented the Annual Report for 2006. Helen spoke about the excellent achievement of the school during 2006 and signalled some areas for further discussion, which made an excellent context setting for the next activity of the evening, the community consultation about the performance and direction of the school.

The meeting was facilitated by Professor Brian Caldwell who has been working with our Strategic Planning Working Group assisting us in planning our school self evaluation and the school review and will go on to work with us in writing a new four year Strategic Plan by the end of 2007. This process of conducting the review is laid down for us by the Department of Education.

The meeting was attended by a number of parents, students, teachers, school support staff and friends of the school, including a representation from Melbourne High School. The hall was set up with round tables and Professor Caldwell explained that the "Zing" technology which he provided for us, enabled each group to feed multiple comments to the computer from the keyboard on each table which would then be projected onto the large screen at the front of the hall. After a trial of the technology which worked perfectly, the activity commenced.

The working party had prepared a set of seven questions which focused on the Department's stipulated areas of review and on what it felt were the key issues for this school. Professor Caldwell posted the questions one by one and provided time for each table to give multiple responses before the responses from all tables were collated into a group and displayed. It was very interesting to see the range of ways in which some questions were interpreted and that some of the responses were directly contradictory to others but it certainly provided a rich tapestry of material. The collated responses to each question were then saved and the next question posed for the same treatment.

By the end of the evening, Professor Caldwell remarked that the volume of material covered included more than 500 individual items and represented the greatest volume of material he had collected using this technology. The software will be now be used to collate and order this material, shaping it into a report which will be used in writing the school self evaluation and the review and leading to the new Strategic Plan. Participants in the evening who left their contact details will receive a copy of the report.

I am including the text of the questions used at the meeting in this newsletter for the information of those who were unable to attend on the night, along with the invitation to write or email us if you would like to respond to them. Please address responses to the Strategic Planning Steering Group at office@macrob.vic.edu.au or mail to 350 Kings Way, Melbourne 3004, including your name and contact details.

Jane Garvey

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## Community Forum—15 May 2007

*Questions:*

- 1) What are the important elements of Mac.Robertson Girls' High School that should be retained?
  - a. What needs to be strengthened or developed?
  - b. What needs to be done differently?
  - c. What elements of the school do we need to discard?



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- 2) Is our mission statement and guiding values (see below) appropriate for the school for the future?

#### Mission Statement

To excel in the provision of education for girls in an intellectually vibrant community.

#### Guiding Values

The Mac.Robertson Girls' High School is committed to:

- engendering a love of learning;
- offering an education based on liberal - democratic values;
- achieving unparalleled academic success;
- providing a challenging, tolerant and supportive environment;
- fostering confidence, responsibility and self-discipline
- cultivating integrity and mutual respect;
- developing effective leadership skills; and
- meeting the challenges of the future while respecting the past.

- 3) What are your priorities for our students' education?
- a. How does Mac.Rob help achieve them?
  - b. How could Mac.Rob achieve them better?
- c. What aspects do you most value about the education the students receive at Mac.Rob and why?
- 4) Mac.Rob students achieve outstanding VCE results. In terms of VCE performance we have topped the State for the last 5 years. However, our annual student survey indicates that our students' confidence as learners decreases over their time at the school.
- a. How well-equipped are our students as learners to meet the demands of VCE and University courses?
  - b. In your experience, do you consider that the confidence of students in their capacity increases or decreases during their journey through the school – why?
  - c. How could we improve what goes on in the classroom to ensure that our students are confident, independent and highly successful learners, not overly reliant on their teachers in their quest to gain the best possible results? How important is this?
- 5) 'Unique in its status as a Statewide provider for girls (Years 9-12), The Mac.Robertson Girls' High School is situated in a central location adjacent to the Albert Park Lake. It offers outstanding facilities for the delivery of its programs and is attended by students from a wide area of metropolitan Melbourne and beyond.' *From the 2006 Annual Report to the School Community*
- a. In what ways are our physical facilities outstanding?
  - b. How might the physical resources of the school foster or inhibit independent and confident learning amongst our students?

- c. What recommendations do you have for future developments to support new approaches to learning?
- 6) Changes have been made to the transition program to help students make the shift to a selective entry school. Year 9 students are the only students present on the first day, all students attend the Year 9 orientation camp, and the peer mentoring 'Links' program provides a Year 10 mentor for the new Year 9 students.
- a. How effective is this transition program in assisting students to make a successful transition to Mac.Rob?
  - b. How could it be further enhanced?
- 7) Our students are provided with information about vocational pathways and support in making subject choices for future careers. Recently we implemented the Morrisby Report to provide vocational guidance for each Year 10 student.
- a. What observations can you make about the school's provision of information to support students in making appropriate subject choices?
  - b. How effective is the advice provided to students in developing their awareness of a broad range of future study and career options?
  - c. What attributes do you believe an employer would be looking for in young graduates now and in the next 10 years and which of these do you believe should be an intrinsic part of the education provided by this school?

## Careers

The sixth issue of the Careers newsletter is available on the intranet.

Guest speakers last week were Erin Wilson who gave a presentation on the new generation Environments degree at Melbourne University and Bianca Faber from the Victorian College of the Arts who discussed music performance, drama, film and television, fine arts and production degrees at the VCA.

#### *Career Expo for all Year 10 Students:*

As part of National Career Development Week Year 10 students will be attending "The Career Your Lifestyle Expo" on the afternoon of Tuesday, 5 June .at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre. Parents should have received an information letter about this activity and are asked to return the permission slip to the school.

#### *KPMG Cadetship program:*

Two information evenings are being held to assist students who would like to take up a cadetship and combine study and paid work. They will be held on Tuesday, May 29 and Thursday, 31 May at KPMG, 17 Collins St Melbourne from 4 00 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. Students wishing to attend should call 1800 000 479 and

leave their name, school, date they wish to attend and their contact number. Parents are also welcome to attend. Applications for the cadetship must be made online at the Careers section of KPMG's website: [kpmg.com.au](http://kpmg.com.au) website by Wednesday, 20 June.

*Traineeships at Ernst and Young:*

The accounting firm Ernst & Young is receiving applications online for traineeships at [www.ey.com.au/careers](http://www.ey.com.au/careers). Applications close on Wednesday, 20 June.

There will be an information session at their offices,  
8 Exhibition St, Melbourne on Wednesday, 6 June from 5.00 p.m. – 6.30 p.m.

**Irene Serpless**  
Careers Advisor

**\*\*\* FORTHCOMING STUDENT FREE DAYS \*\*\*  
& PUBLIC HOLIDAY**

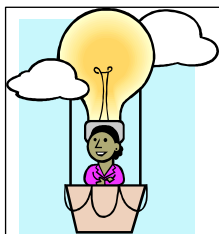
Please note that students are not required at school on the following days:

- Friday, 25 May – Curriculum Day;
- Monday, 11 June – Queen's Day (Public Holiday); and
- Thursday, 14 June – Report Writing Day.

**Small Grants 2007 – A Parents' Association Initiative  
(Ends Friday, 15 June, 2007)**

Dear brilliant Mac.Robians (Yes, students AND teachers) !!!

Did you miss out on a Mac.Rob Activity? ... or can you think of a new one?



For example:  
 Debating  
 Arts  
 Music  
 Sports  
 Community building  
 Cultural  
 (Insert your ideas here!!!)



Here is your chance to create and lead your own opportunity and take others with you on the journey!!!

Parents@Macro Small Grants support, through financial assistance, projects which:

1. Bring new experiences of learning – something you did not get to do because of it not being available;
2. Involve additional exploration of knowledge – e.g. through attending external events and conferences;
3. Extend participation by students, teachers and parents; and
4. Will not become operational without this assistance.

Please contact the General Office for application forms and detailed criteria.

When you have completed your application:

1. Make a photocopy for your record;
2. Lodge the original at the General Office;
3. Make a note of the name and person who dates and signs your form; and
4. **Submit the application to the General Office by Friday, 15 June.**



CSIRO's Double Helix Science Club  
presents two **FREE** events:



### *Ever wondered where a science degree might lead you?*

Are you interested in science, but unsure about what exactly a scientist *does*?  
Are you unsure about VCE subject choices or which degree to do at University?  
Then come and meet the scientists as they discuss their interests, motivations,  
career paths and courses of study.

Admission is open to students, parents and teachers, but is particularly  
recommended for Year 10 – 12 students.

### Careers in Physics

Come and meet three research physicists whose work ranges from the very tiny  
(micro/nanophysics) to the enormous new Australian Synchrotron facility. A short  
tour of the space centre will also be provided.

**Where:** Victorian Space Science Education Centre at Strathmore Secondary  
College, 400 Pascoe Vale Road, Strathmore

**When:** Wednesday, 6 June

**Time:** 6.30 – 8.00 p.m. - refreshments served from 6.00 p.m.

### Careers in Biology

Meet a forensic scientist, a histologist and a research biologist to find out the  
variety of fields a degree in Biology might lead you into.

**Where:** CSIRO Molecular & Health Technologies, 343 Royal Parade Parkville

**When:** Wednesday, 13 June

**Time:** 6:30 – 8.00 p.m. - refreshments served from 6.00 p.m.



**Please call  
(03) 9252 6387 to  
register interest and  
we'll send you  
further information.**

