Dear families,

Another week has flown past and I continue to be impressed by the attitude and behaviour of our students. They have settled so quickly into new routines. On the few occasions we have required a relief teacher the feedback regarding your children has been extremely pleasing. It reflects the work we have done across the college in exploring our values. If you walk through our learning communities they are visible.

Thank you to all our families who took the opportunity to meet our staff and exchange pertinent information to ensure a smooth start. There was a fabulous response from our community which demonstrates your commitment to our value of ‘learn.’ Getting involved in your child’s school can be extremely rewarding. Learn about how you can participate, celebrate events, provide support and stay informed by checking our fortnightly newsletters or website. You can download a link for your smartphone for ease of access; follow the steps on our website.

Our college athletics day will be held on Tuesday 17th March and we will be running a prep to year 9 connections whole college activity also during that week. The focus will be on the National Day of Action against Bullying. This annual day provides a focus for all schools to say Bullying. No Way! and to strengthen their existing everyday messages that bullying and violence at school are not okay at any time.

On Friday afternoon information was emailed to all families regarding our college council elections. School councils play a key role in Victorian government schools. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within centrally provided guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students. Participating as a school council member is a rewarding and challenging experience.

There are two current parent vacancies. Nominations opened on the 16th February and will close at 4:00pm on Monday 23rd February. If the number of nominations is greater than the number of vacancies an election will be held.

The network swimming carnival for our Year 5 and 6 students was held this week and I congratulate all participants on their interest, efforts and enthusiasm. The summer sporting competition has also begun each Friday for these students. The Hobson’s Bay Division summer sports will kick off shortly with volleyball for the Year 7 to 9 students.

Our prep to 6 students have been busy in the vegetable garden and the kitchen program commenced this week as well. Mrs Staunton has returned following a trip to India inspired by the cuisine she encountered. Our Year 7’s loved their first cooking session making mini pavlovas which they promptly devoured.

On Wednesday our Year 9 students were up bright and early to travel to Mount Buffalo for their leadership and development camp. This is an important part of our “LEAD” program for Year 9’s and we look forward to them leading our college community throughout 2015. Our college captains and student leadership team will be in place shortly and we will be holding a special assembly to enable them to address the college and be presented with their badges. Our year 9’s also run our college canteen selling drinks and icy poles. We are awaiting further stock on back order but it will be up and running shortly at both recess and lunchtimes.

When arriving at or when leaving the college families may have noticed a black dog wearing a blue coat that says “In Training Service Dog” in the playground. Cammie is a special working dog and wears this special in training service coat. This coat distinguishes her clearly to us as members of the public. Cammie is not a pet and I ask that you support the family and do not approach / pat / talk to or feed her at any time.

Air conditioning was installed this week in the Early Years Learning Centre and administration. We will continue to budget annually for additional units across the college.

Wishing all our families a relaxing weekend, enjoy the lovely summer weather.

Julie Krause
Principal
STUDENT ACCIDENT AND INSURANCE COVER

As we begin another school year parents are reminded that the Department does not provide personal accident insurance or ambulance cover for students. Parents and guardians of students, who do not have student accident insurance/ambulance cover, are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including the cost of ambulance attendance/transport and any other transport costs. Parents/guardians can purchase insurance policies from commercial insurers.

The Department also does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it has no capacity to pay for any loss or damage to such property. Private property brought to school by students, staff or visitors is not insured and the Department does not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage.

STUDENT WELLBEING NEWS

Mrs Julie Giles is overseeing student wellbeing support in 2015 and is the key contact person for parents. Julie is available on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the term. If you would like to meet Julie you will find her in the food technology centre prior to school on these two days overseeing our Breakfast Club. Please feel free to drop in with your children and introduce yourself. If you wish to meet with Julie to discuss your child she is available by appointment or by phone. Please contact our Business Manager, Wendy Jennings who will arrange a time for you. We aim to meet your needs as soon as practicable and families are welcome to phone and leave a message for Julie to make contact. Julie is working with our staff to facilitate the Positive Education program and LEAD program in Year 9 throughout the year. Mrs Giles is able to refer students to school support services (where applicable), On Psych or a private psychologist where students have been provided with a mental health plan by their general practitioner.

In addition we are delighted to welcome back our chaplain Mrs Cathie Staunton. Cathie is both a teacher and a chaplain. On Monday’s Cathie leads our edible garden program in the kitchen and is available on Tuesdays as our designated chaplain. She will be working closely with Mrs Julie Giles and Mr McGee with our LEAD program in Year 9, Seasons for Grief (students suffering loss and grief through family changes) and will assist us to develop community links and support. Information regarding the chaplaincy program is included in the newsletter. Cathie is available to meet with parents and students. If families leave a message at the office it will be passed on to Cathie via email and she will make contact. This year Cathie will be working an additional day a fortnight to support our wellbeing program. Cathie is often at breakfast club on Mondays preparing for the kitchen garden program. Please drop by and introduce yourself.

Mrs Jane Aiternatt is our college nurse. Jane is a part of the secondary nursing program in schools and works closely with our wellbeing team. Jane has been active in the early weeks of term speaking to the secondary students about hygiene, changes and the immunisation program. Jane is an active participant in health and wellbeing programs in years 7 to 9. If you have questions regarding your young adolescents health and wellbeing Jane is a great resource.

Ms Julie Krause (Principal) and Mr Mathew Kelly (Assistant Principal) are available each day to meet with families regarding their child’s wellbeing. It is recommended that families make an appointment through Wendy Jennings Business Manager however messages can be left for the Principal Class Officers to call families. Drop in appointments are only available in situations with some urgency and are dependent on availability. When Mr Kelly and Ms Krause are absent there is a designated staff member in charge of the college.

Other Support Services

Hobson’s Bay Youth Services offer a range of services to support our secondary students. This year we will be offering programs to students in Year 7, both boys and girls facilitated by this service including Drum Beat, Life Fit and a girls camp for a small group of students. Year 9 students will also be linking into this service as a part of their LEAD program. A counselling service is also available for our secondary students free of charge.
NATIONAL SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

I am pleased to announce Altona P9 College has received funding for another 2 years to run the School Chaplaincy Program. This means I will continue on at the College in my role as Chaplain on Tuesdays and very shortly will also be available another day a fortnight.

For those unfamiliar with the Chaplaincy Program a Chaplain is someone support the emotional wellbeing of students by providing pastoral care services and strategies. They work closely with wellbeing and allied health staff in schools to support students and their educational outcomes, staff, families and the wider school community.

A Chaplains role and responsibilities include:

- working as a member of the school's wellbeing team in the delivery of student wellbeing services.
- contributing to improving student engagement and connection with each other, staff, family and the wider community.
- operate within the school community and with external providers.
- providing support in areas such as student attendance and mental health
- providing students, their families and staff with support and/or appropriate referrals in difficult situations such as during times of grief, or when students are facing personal or emotional challenges
- providing pastoral care and guidance to students about values and ethical matters, referring students, or sourcing appropriate services to meet their needs, which may involve access to services in the community
- supporting students and staff to create an environment which promotes the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development and wellbeing of all students
- supporting students and staff to create an environment of cooperation and mutual respect, and promoting an understanding of diversity within the range of cultures and relevant traditions.

While I come from a Christian background the Chaplaincy program is not a religious program and is available to all students, families and staff on a voluntary basis. It has been a privilege to work amongst this school community over the past 3 years and I look forward to continuing to promote a culture of nurture and care in our College for the next 2 years. I am available to provide support for all students and their families. If there is anything I could assist your family with please email me at Staunton.cathie.l@edumail.vic.gov.au or leave a message with the front office. This term I will be starting up some peer support groups around family separation and divorce. If this is something you think your child could benefit from please email me.


Thanks,
Cathie Staunton

SUNSMART POLICY

At Altona P-9 College hats are compulsory for all students. Students must have a hat when outdoors during recess, lunch, on excursions and during Physical Education. This policy is strictly enforced at our College. Sunscreen is certainly advised during term 1 and term 4 students require a refillable bottle of water.
FOOD TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Last week in the Food Technology room, the Year 7’s created an AUSTRALIAN classic – Pavlova!!! From whisking to baking, every second waiting was definitely worth it! From that most delicious crunch to the softness in your mouth, the Pavlova’s were a big hit!

Ms Yasmine Latife
Food Technology Teacher

EDIBLE GARDENS NEWS

I am glad to report we have started the school year with a bumper crop of beans, potatoes, cabbages and cucumbers which we look forward to cooking this term. With such an abundant harvest and more to come we hope to preserve some of our produce to use later on in the year.

This week we made the biggest bucket of Sauerkraut you have ever seen! It was with much delight 5/6A pounded shredded cabbage with salt to begin the fermentation process. We have also pickled some cucumbers to pop into some burgers later in the term.

As part of the Seed Savers program, who generously support our Edible Garden, we hosted a Bunches of Lunches Workshop last Saturday. It was a fabulous way to showcase the excellent facilities we have available in our school. Around 20 visitors to our school produced some delicious and nutritious lunchbox alternatives that were excellent alternatives to the sometimes boring sandwich. Check out the photos! We have the recipes we cooked up on the school website shortly. We will possibly be running another Bunches of Lunches workshop later in the year so we’ll keep you posted.

Once again we’re seeking volunteers to help out in our kitchen or garden. No prior experience needed just the willingness to learn, a current working with childrens’ check and availability on a Monday. If you’re interested please email me at Staunton.cathie.l@edumail.vic.gov.au or contact the college.

Cathie Staunton
Edible Gardens Teacher
To Parents and Carers:

You are invited to a Morning Tea on
Tuesday March 3
At 9:15am
In the Food Tech Centre

Come and hear about the Parents and Carers volunteering opportunities at the school and about some of the projects (completed and ongoing) around campus.

From The Fundraising Committee
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM AT SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Students,

ABC Music Group is seeking new enrolments for students interested in joining the INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM in 2015. Lessons are held during the school day and we may COMMENCE AN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM SHORTLY.

The program provides a fun introduction to music and also assists students thinking to continue their music education in secondary school.

PROGRAM FEATURES
30 minute group lessons
Keyboard & guitars are provided for each student during lessons
Parent/Guardian will be invoiced for the cost of the lessons

Keyboard – Guitar ($135 per term plus *2 keyboard books $35 or guitar book $20)

If you are interested in joining the program during school or after school please call Bill 9890 6040 for an introductory offer

“I would teach the children music, physics and philosophy; but the most important is music, the patterns of music are the keys to all learning” - Plato

CAMP AUSTRALIA
Before and After School Care Program

Hello parents and students,

Up at Camp Australia’s After School Care program we have been keeping very active and busy. During the past few days the children have been engaged in many creative activities in preparation for the Chinese New Year this coming Thursday. They have all been very enthusiastic and diligent in ensuring our decorations and artworks are bright and colourful before we step into the Year of the Goat. We have also put up various visual aids to encourage one another to be inquisitive and exchange knowledge. We’ve also recently established a home for our Kimochis who the children were introduced to yesterday. Kimochis are a progressive teaching aid used to encourage children to identify emotions and use as an alternative form of communication as well as making for good cuddle buddies. The children have been sharing ideas and collaborating with one another and have even planned and organised several science experiments and weekly themes. Away from the creativity that goes on indoors, the children have been engaging in active and energised outdoor play daily and always seem to have fun group games lined up. Next week we will be having a Dinosaur themed week and the children already have a dinosaur egg called Buster just waiting to hatch for all the fun we have organised.
Monday 16th February Michael Masseni and a representative from the Altona Little Athletics Centre came to our school to conduct LAPS (Little Athletics Program for Schools).

If was a fantastic day where our Prep - Year 4 students took part in an introductory athletics session with modified equipment. New skills and techniques were learnt and it gave all the students an opportunity of taking part in Little Athletics based activities.

Anyone interested in joining Little Athletics, please contact the: Altona Little Athletics Centre on the following:

PHONE NUMBER: 0499 994305
E-MAIL: Altona@lavic.com.au
VENUE: Altona Athletics track, Sugargum Drive
DAY OF COMPETITION / TIME: Saturday mornings 8am