



From the Deputy Headmaster – Head of Senior School

24th June 2022

End of Term 2 Letter

Our focus throughout Term 2 has been the continuing return to normalcy after the rolling COVID-19 crisis of the past two years. We have strived to give students access to all the myriad co-curricular activities and panoply of special events that combine to make life at Blue Mountains Grammar special. It has been a genuine joy to see our students participating so actively in our Winter Sports, Debating, Chess, STEM, Art, Winter Ball, Music and Drama. Similarly, we have watched as our Year 12 students have grown into their leadership roles with the Student Representative Council, and our Year 11 students have prepared for their turn to take up the mantle of student leadership. In a similar vein, we have done our utmost to ensure that where many of our students missed out on excursions in the latter half of last year, their learning this term has been punctuated by peak experiences both inside the School and in the wider community.

In the midst of all this excitement, our teaching team have continued to work hard to increase the rigour of our students' classroom learning, engaging them in challenging and authentic learning activities and assessment. Throughout Term 3 we will continue this academic focus, particularly as our Year 12 students progress towards their HSC Examinations.

Staffing Changes

I am pleased to say that there are no changes to staffing in the Senior School this term.

Term 3 Commencement Assembly and House Meetings

School resumes for students on Wednesday 20th July. We will begin our day with a Commencement Assembly in Cuff Hall at 8:30am. Classes will resume as normal from Period 1 at 9:05am. Parents are cordially invited to attend our Commencement Assembly, and to join the Headmaster and Executive Team for Morning Tea in the Residence (Kedumba Gallery) thereafter.

[Please click this link to RSVP.](#)

Ongoing COVID-19 Precautions

At this time twelve months ago, our community was about to enter an extended period of lockdown, with sixteen weeks of isolation and home learning. A year later, it remains vital that we continue to take sensible precautions to manage the risk this virus poses. I commend the School's COVID-19 Guidelines to your reading, and draw your attention to the following specific points:

- If you are experiencing even the mildest cold and flu symptoms, please remain home and be tested. Students demonstrating cold and flu symptoms will be immediately isolated in Sickbay and sent home.
- Please continue to practice good hand-hygiene. Throughout Term 3 students will continue to be asked to sanitise their hands at the beginning of each lesson and will disinfect desks at the beginning and end of each lesson.

The Dangers of Vaping

Thank you to the many parents who have taken on board the School's advice with regard to the dangers of vaping and who have engaged their children in the challenging conversations that we know are needed to keep our young people safe. I encourage parents and carers to engage with the communications we have sent regarding vaping throughout the term.

Year 12 Trial HSC Examinations

Our Year 12 students will be undertaking their Trial HSC Examinations in Weeks 3-4 of Term 3. While we support our students' access to tertiary studies through multiple pathways, performance in the HSC and the achievement of a high Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank remains the most straight-forward and reliable pathway to university study. Students are encouraged to devote a significant portion of their Winter Holiday to examination preparation, ensuring not only a thorough degree of mastery of their course content, but also the well-practiced examination skills needed to navigate their first set of full HSC-style exams. They are also encouraged to take some time to relax!



Year 12 University Applications

Our Year 12 Careers Program is well underway, with students having heard presentations from multiple universities and attended the BMGS Careers Expo in Term 2. With early-bird university applications due over coming weeks, students are encouraged to spend the necessary time this holiday researching their tertiary education options carefully and to make appointments to meet with Mrs. Michielsen to discuss options for early entry. Each year an increasing proportion of our students receive early offers to the university degrees of their choice, with all students seeking early entry in 2021 receiving one or more early offers to university. Universities increasingly recognise that raw marks are not the only indication of a young person's potential success at university, and look for students who have demonstrated leadership as well as ongoing participation in sport, music, the creative and performing arts and community organisations. Our students are uniquely prepared to meet such a test!

Year 11 Leadership Applications

Blue Mountains Grammar School has a long tradition of growing outstanding young leaders, and our leadership program is both thorough and well-designed. Throughout Term 2, our Year 11 students worked collaboratively with their Tutor Groups to create a Senior School Quality Improvement Plan relating to their choice of the following community wellbeing themes:

- Enhancing relationships between Year Groups;
- Deepening engagement with the Ad Altiora Framework;
- Growing student involvement in extra/co-curricular activities;
- Improving participation in the spiritual life of the community;
- Increasing environmental awareness;
- Developing broader community connections.

Having presented their plans at the end of Term 2, it is hoped that they will continue to bear fruit in the community in Term 3, and throughout their time in leadership in Year 12. Please note the following timeline for the selection and induction of Student Leaders for the 2021-2022 year:

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| ○ Week 5 Term 2 | Year 11 Year Meeting, Program Launch ; |
| ○ Weeks 5 – 8 Term 2 | Creation and Conduct of Community Wellbeing Plans; |
| ○ Week 9 Term 2 | Presentation of Community Wellbeing Plans and Progress, Distribution of Student Leadership Applications; |
| ○ Week 1 Term 3 | Student Leadership Applications Due; |
| ○ Week 2 Term 3 | Staff review/feedback on Student Leadership Applications; |
| ○ Weeks 2-3 Term 3 | Student Leadership Interviews and voting processes; |
| ○ Week 5 Term 3 | Induction Ceremony and Morning Tea; |
| ○ Week 6 Term 3 | Student Leadership Induction Day. |

We look forward to inviting parents to our Leadership Induction Ceremony and Morning Tea. If your child is among those selected for student leadership, please look for your invitation soon.

Years 8-10 Subject Selection Processes

Students, parents and carers will now have received information relating to subject selection for the 2023 academic year. It was a great pleasure to welcome Year 8, 9 and 10 students to our Subject Selection Evenings late in Term 2, and to interview each and every Year 10 student over the last week of term. Years 8, 9 and 10 students, parents and carers are reminded that subject selections for 2023 are due Friday 22nd July.

Icebreakers Invitation

Parents of Year 7 students, and all new parents to the BMGS Senior School are cordially invited to our annual Icebreakers Evening, to be held on Friday 22nd July (Friday Week 1), at 7:00pm. This long-running annual event was postponed from the beginning of Term 1 due to COVID-safety considerations, and we are pleased to welcome all our new parents and families to the Senior School on behalf of the Executive Team, Staff, and Parents and Friends Association. [Please click here to RSVP.](#)



Final Greetings

It is my hope and prayer that your family will enjoy a restful break this Holiday, and be refreshed for the coming School Term.

Yours Sincerely,

Owen Laffin

Deputy Headmaster – Head of Senior School