

SPECIAL EDITION
14 DECEMBER 2023

CONGRATULATIONS VCE CLASS OF 2023



Deborah Harman Principal

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Congratulations to our Class of 2023 – A Fantastic Conclusion to their time at BHS!

Dear BHS Community Members

We extend our sincere congratulations to the 366 students who made up our Class of 2023. They were a fantastic cohort who were strongly connected to their peers and the school throughout their six years at Balwyn High School. They personified our school theme 'Empathy, Belonging, Connections' and were superbly led throughout by Charlie Baniyas, Margaret Obolenski, Zac Miritis, Tania Batova, Fearghas Bennett and Emma Ho, and a fantastic wider student leadership team.

We are indebted to the ongoing support, care and advocacy of their families, our Leadership, Senior School and Wellbeing Teams and our amazing staff. I thank every contributor who played their part in the success of this cohort, and trust that they too will share in the success of the Class of 2023.

Their excellent results, released on Monday 11 December, are as follows:

2023 School Dux – Douglas Joshi 99.9

Douglas, who was one of our Music Captains this year, participated in both the International and Asian Physics Olympiads, and is one of 25 students Australia wide to be granted an ANU Tuckwell Scholarship for 2024. In achieving this phenomenal score Douglas achieved perfect study scores of 50 in 2022 Mathematical Methods and Physics and this year for Chemistry.

"Across both physics and biology, I've thoroughly appreciated the unparalleled opportunity to not only deepen my knowledge, but also meet like-minded peers from across Australia" (Douglas on his experience with the International Olympiad)

Douglas' dream job would involve scientific research, specifically to use physics to address long standing biological problems and potential for medical applications. Outside of scientific pursuits, he's a keen cellist, reads a diversity of Literature and philosophy, and is a regular distance runner.

Congratulations Douglas! We can't wait to see what the future holds for you.

The major highlights of the results include:

- 15 students achieved an ATAR of 99 and above
- 53 students (14%) will take their place on the Honour Roll, having achieved an ATAR of 97 and above
- 83 students (23%) achieved an ATAR of 95 and above
- 126 (34%) achieved an ATAR of 90 and above, placing them in the top 10% of the state
- Scores above 40 – 16.4%, Scores above 40 for Year 11 students – 43.4%
- Study Score Median - 32, Year 11 Study Score Median of 38
- 14 perfect Study Scores were achieved by:



Andrew Corr
Assistant Principal



Tegan Knuckey
Assistant Principal



Julien Escurat
Assistant Principal



Hamish Anderson
Assistant Principal

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PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.



Justin Hong
Director of Senior School



Ameer Duncan
Assistant Director of
Senior School



Bianca Prendergast
Year 12 Student Learning and
Wellbeing Manager



Viet Bui
Year 12 Student Learning and
Wellbeing Manager

Chemistry



Douglas Joshi



Cemil Ozcitti

English



Kaveesha Kothari



Jen Jones

English



Diana Bao
(Year 11)



Chris Land

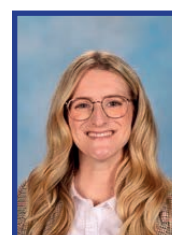
English & History Revolutions



Janindu (Chith)
Weliamuna



Amy Wood



Jane Gibson

Health and Human Development



Nethmi Sumanasekara
(Year 11)



Dusanka Devic

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PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.



Dani Cantor
Director of Senior School
Wellbeing



Paul Gear
Student Engagment
and Development -
Senior School



Susan Qu
International Student
Director



Erin Shale
VCE Careers Coordinator

Health and Human
Development



Zac Miritis



Chris Triantafilopoulos

Health and Human
Development &
Physical Education



Asiyah Al-Qureshi



Andre Gianfagna



Justin Hong

General Maths

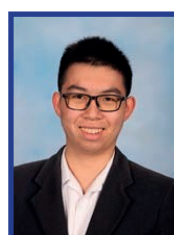


Xianting (Iris) Wang



Kevin Le

General Maths



Kai Yi Ong



James Shepherd

General Maths



Matthew Yan
(Year 11)



Kevin Le

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.

Mathematical Methods

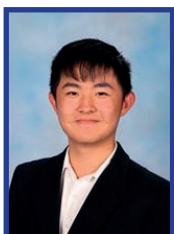


Elizabeth Ngodinhson
(Year 11)



Fan Wang

Psychology



Thomas Zhao
(Year 11)



Lynna Gong

We have also heard this morning that Zac Miritis (Economics) and Tania Batova (French) have topped their University extension classes. Congratulations Zac and Tania!

As a cohort, the Class of 2023 has participated generously across the school in and beyond the classroom, and have served as wonderful role models for our younger students. They have contributed every day to our classroom and school culture of excellence and promoting that 'it is cool to do well at Balwyn'. I thank them sincerely and wish them all the very best for the very bright futures that lie ahead.

I also congratulate Justin Hong, Director of Senior School, who in his first year at Balwyn High School has set his mark and led with distinction. He reflects below on this superb cohort:

Congratulations to our exceptional class of 2023 on their remarkable VCE results. Their achievement is certainly a testament to their dedication and perseverance, as well as the unconditional support from subject teachers who are always a major part of their VCE journeys. We know that our students have already found success in their own ways in completing their secondary education, so these extraordinary results are simply another recognition for the students that we are so proud of.

For this wonderful cohort the next important date will be in January when the VTAC Course Offers are released. We know that this is both an exciting and anxious time for them and wish all students all the very best for the various pathways that await them. I trust they will always retain great memories of their time in our outstanding school community.

We will look forward to celebrating with the Honour Roll students on 2 February 2024.

Thank you again to the Class of 2023, for the marvellous ambassadors you have been for Balwyn High School!

Deborah Harman | Principal



ISSUE 19 | 14 DECEMBER



Charlie Baniias
Margaret Obolenski
School Captains



Learning To Be



Deborah Harman Principal

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

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Seasons Greetings

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Season's Greetings to the School Community

As this will be the final 'Lion' for the year I wish all members of the school community a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It is a special time to enjoy the festive season with all we hold dear. I sincerely trust that the holiday break will be filled with wonderful memories.

2023 has been a year of extraordinary success for our students and staff, culminating in our two Victorian Education Excellence Awards in October (VEEA) – Outstanding Provision for High Ability Students (Secondary) and the ultimate recognition with the Lindsay Thompson Excellence in Education Award. Both these awards reflect the remarkable commitment of our Leadership Team and staff, the determination and talents of our students, and the outstanding support of our families. Congratulations to us all!

Thank you to my Assistant Principals – Andrew Corr, Tegan Knuckey, Hamish Anderson, Julien Escurat - the Leadership Team, Sebastian Goder, Business Manager, Maggie Bozinis, Facilities Manager, Susan Qu, International Student Program Director, Bernadette Clayton, Director of Community Engagement, Subschool and Wellbeing teams, teaching staff, our superb teachers and educational support staff, students and families for their contributions to the school over the course of what has been another huge year for Balwyn High School. I would also like to acknowledge Lazaros Zikou and the School Council, and Jeff Lampard and the Chaplaincy Committee for their support, commitment and work throughout 2023.

I am especially proud of all the 27 alumni we featured this year as part of our Alumni Spotlights and thank them for allowing us to share their career achievements and reflections of their time at Balwyn High School with our school community. Many of them were in the audience on Tuesday evening for Presentation Night such was their bond to Balwyn, and the gratitude they still have for the education and opportunities that were offered to them during their time here.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Balwyn High School acknowledges the Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land we work, learn and play on and pays respect to their cultures and Elders, past, present and emerging.



PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.

We now look to 2024 with great hope and positivity. I have intentionally chosen the theme 'Dedication, Loyalty, Legacy' for our Platinum Jubilee celebrations next year and trust it will guide and reflect all of our work and interactions and will resonate as strongly with our students, staff and families as this year's theme.

All the very best for a safe, healthy and happy summer holiday break. See you back on Wednesday 31 January for another wonderful year of learning and work together.

Presentation Night – 'Empathy, Belonging, Connections'

Last week we celebrated our 2023 Presentation Night at Hamer Hall and we were absolutely thrilled with the outcome and the feedback we have received from the school community, Department of Education, NEV Region staff, a selection of our alumni featured as part of this year's Spotlights, and our other VIP guests. It was the most marvellous evening that recognised many students from all year levels with awards ranging from The Bruce Armstrong Lion Award, Principal's Awards, Outstanding Academic Achievement, Academic Excellence, Buchanan, Music, Sport, Community Service and Leadership.

Congratulations to Malcolm Speed AO, who was formally inducted into the Balwyn High School Hall of Achievement during the evening by John de la Motte, 2014 HOA inductee. Malcolm had been inducted to our Sport Hall of Achievement in 2006 but now occupies a place alongside the other BHS HOA inductees that grace our administration foyer given his continued career achievements and impact since that induction.



The eagerly awaited Finale certainly stunned the audience again with the orchestra, choirs and soloists – Sunny Li (Alumnus) Hannah Estores, Nenah Jones (vocal), Eric (guitar), and Isaiah (saxophone) performing the most wonderful selections of songs alongside our inspiring didgeridoo player, Ganga, our fantastic concert choirs and the entire Year 7 cohort. It was positively stirring and heartwarming to see our students perform in that way to generate such a celebration and acknowledgement of all that we do.

My 2023 Principal's Awards recognised Neha Basu and Alexander Eliades (Year 9), and Emma Ho and Fearghas Bennett (Year 12). These four students have been outstanding in their leadership, music,



sport, community service and application to their studies throughout their subschool years.

Again this year we have recognised one student at each year level for an Outstanding Academic Achievement Award. Congratulations to the following recipients:

Jae Hao (Year 7), Emily Vu (Year 8 - David Pannan), Liam Lancaster (Year 9), William Zhu (Year 10), Elizabeth Ngodinhson (Year 11 - Cuthbert Moody) and Douglas Joshi (Year 12 - Harry Britain).



PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.



I was extremely proud of all our students and staff and thank all families and community members who joined us at Hamer Hall for the presentation. Many thanks to everyone who worked so tirelessly to ensure another great success – in particular to Bernadette Clayton, Director of Community Engagement, for her innovative and creative genius, greatly supported by Teaghan Gibson, Director of Music, and Hamish Anderson, Middle School Assistant Principal. All of our Music staff, the Leadership Team, Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers, many teachers and the Administration staff have also played pivotal roles leading up to the evening and I thank them sincerely for their work and commitment. In particular the inspirational graphic design work of Tracey Launder, and the exceptional General Highlights and Snapshots video presentations from Rein Kivivali were fabulous.

Congratulations – Bruce Armstrong Lion Award – Tania Batova

The Bruce Armstrong Lion Award is named in honour of former Balwyn High School Principal Bruce Armstrong who led our community from 2002 to 2008. The Bruce Armstrong Lion Award is awarded annually to a Year 12 student who has demonstrated all the qualities that Bruce himself was renowned for - service to others (in or beyond the school), diligence, resilience and courage, personal best and leadership potential - over the six years they were at our school.

This year this major award was presented to Tania Batova, 2023 School Vice-Captain. Throughout her journey at Balwyn High School, Tanya has seized all the opportunities which have been presented to her.

Throughout her six years at Balwyn High School, Tania has made her mark in the classroom, where her passion for learning and the pursuit of her personal best has had a fantastic impact on classroom culture and her peers. Tania has also been an extensive contributor to our co-curricular programs. While actively participating in the sport program – both as a fantastic team member in a number of different sports and a dedicated student coach to younger peers, she has been an outstanding member of the Music program - symphonic band, concert bands, flute ensembles, symphony orchestra and participated in the USA Music tour in 2019. She has led the school community as part of the SRC for several years. Tania developed her leadership skills to become our School Vice-Captain this year. For the past two years has been a mature, insightful and valuable student representative on School Council. Tania has been praised for being such a fantastic role model for the student community, with many gaining an understanding of her intelligence, determination and humour as part of Shaun Micallef's Brain Eisteddfod in a televised event last year. Her most notable leadership attributes are her passion, her generosity in her efforts and her tenacity to achieve her goals. Congratulations Tania for being named this year as the recipient of the Bruce Armstrong Lion Award.



Congratulations Tania!

Student Leadership and Student Voice – Year 12 and Middle School Captains

The 2024 Senior Student Leadership Team and Middle School Captains were inducted on Presentation Night. We are confident they will provide stellar leadership to the student body, and they will continue to work with the Principal and Leadership Teams of the school to represent the 'student voice' of the 2200 students who make up the Balwyn High School community.

Rosie Hilder, Director of Student Leadership and Voice, was simply marvellous with her superb support of this year's student leaders and for overseeing the enormous task of the selection processes for 2024. Rosie and I have conducted over 100 interviews over the past 10 weeks. Thank you also to Julien Escurat, Hamish Anderson, Justin Hong, Chris Land, Amee Duncan, Teaghan Gibson, Paulina Makarova, our House Teachers and Clubs and Committees liaisons, who worked alongside Rosie and myself to play significant roles in the appointments of the student leaders.

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.



I wish to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate Charlie Baniyas and Margaret Obolenski, School Captains, who have led a great team of students throughout the year – including Vice Captains Tania Batova and Zac Miritis, and SRC Presidents, Emma Ho and Fearghas Bennett. They simply could not have been more influential this year, being truly inspiring in all aspects of their roles. As recently as Friday 1 December Charlie and Margaret were nominated to contribute to The Academy of Teaching and Leadership's Teaching Excellence Program graduation event and were brilliant in their interactions with all participants and VIP guests who acknowledged their pride for our school and their leadership skills throughout the day.

The baton of leadership has now been passed on to the following students:



Vanessa Tran
School Captain 2024



Ranisha Devadason
School Captain 2024



Derek Li
School Vice Captain
2024



Angelina Tang
School Vice Captain
2024

SRC Presidents: Ryan Jiang and Grace Shaw

SRC Executive: Sahel Al-Qatatsheh, Eason Gu, Colin Joshi, Dheeraj Kartik, Azka Memon, Clare Xu

International Captains: Rita Cui and Jack Thant

Music Captains: Mia Alexander, Selina Chong, Akio Wongko, Andrew You

Sports Captains: Arabella Lesmana, Hugo Maccarone, Madeline Rees, Nikolett Tsekrekos

Wellbeing Captains: Hira Kang and Nadia Marikar

Social Justice Captains: Diana Bao and Sayuni Wijayabandara

Debating Captains: Samaira Maheshwari and Thomas Zhao

Environment Captains: Gabrielle Lim and Jana Du Toit

Visual Arts Captain: Megan Campbell and Vicky Chen

Theatre Arts Captains: Alberly Chan and Amy Liem

Sound and Light Captains: Alicia Duong and Jared Lim

STEAM Captains: Calista Arief and Will He

Churchill House Captains: Sienna Le and Alexander Macrae

Edinburgh House Captains: Will Louey and Indra Talwar

Strathmore House Captains: Alexander Kelly and Max Leonidis

Windsor House Captains: Kit-Lin Looi and Junn Siah

Middle School (Year 9) Captains: Elise Ferguson- Roberts and Simonette Wijewardane

Middle School SRC Executive: Vindy Asuramuni and Hannah Roscoe

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE Cont.



Student Leadership and Student Voice – Year Level Captains 2024

Congratulations to the following students who have been selected as Year Level Captains for 2024. These students will join the School Captains, Vice Captains and International Captains, as well as the SRC Presidents on my Principal's Advisory Group (P.A.G) next year:

Year 11: Yong Hao Chan and Nethmi Sumanasekera

Year 10: Chloe Pearce and Mohammad Hosseinkhan Quandehari

Year 8: Cassidy Browne and Anja Bretmaisser

The Year 7 Level Captains will be decided early in Term 1 next year.

Farewell to Staff

To the staff who are leaving Balwyn High School to take up positions in other government schools or in the independent school sector, taking periods of leave, or to other vocational choices, we wish them all the best for the next stage of their lives and careers. We are confident that they will make equally strong contributions to their new schools and workplaces as they have done within our school community.

We have paid tribute to retiring staff members – Catriona Tweedie, Serguei Tchebykin, Maggie Bozinis, Margaret Coulter and Merrin Ayton - in this year's Buchanan, and we thank them again for their marvellous service to Balwyn High School and government school education. We wish Catriona, Serguei, Maggie, Margaret and Merrin all the very best for their retirements from a very grateful Balwyn High School community.



Over the past semester we have been actively recruiting new staff for 2023 and have held our New Staff Induction over the past two days for our 21 new teaching and ES colleagues. It is always an exciting time for the Principal Team to interview prospective applicants who aspire to teach and work at Balwyn High School. We are very much looking forward to welcoming and supporting them in their transition, along with all of our new students. New staff will be introduced to the school community in the first edition of 'The Lion' in February 2024.

Alumni News – Class of 1974 Reunion - Save the Date

We have been contacted by two of our BHS Class of 1974 – Johann Anderson and Zaita Oldfield – who are organising the 50 year reunion for the cohort on Saturday 20 April 2024. The event will be held at Balwyn High School and will include a school tour for the group in the afternoon and then celebrations in the G Newitt Music Centre.

We hope that this early notification will mean a large gathering for this very important reconnection with school peers.

Deborah Harman | Principal

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S REPORT



Andrew Corr
Assistant Principal



Tegan Knuckey
Assistant Principal



Julien Escurat
Assistant Principal



Hamish Anderson
Assistant Principal

Learning To Be

An acknowledgement of Deborah's leadership

We are so proud that our Principal, Deborah Harman has been awarded the ACEL VICTORIA Debbie Locco Leadership Award. ACEL (Australian Council for Educational Leaders) explains that this award acknowledges and perpetuates the memory of the life and work of Debbie Locco ACEL (Vic). Debbie was an inspirational and influential educator who played a pivotal leadership role in empowering and shaping future leaders. The recipient of this award is an ACEL member who has demonstrated Debbie's passion, energy and commitment, to inspire current and future leaders and members of the profession, to engender the best possible educational outcomes for children and young people. We're so proud of this acknowledgement of Deborah who has committed so much of herself to Balwyn High School over the years and is so committed to state education in Victoria. Her dedication to building leadership capacity at our school is what has enabled the achievement of such great results in so many areas across the school.



Reflecting and resetting in Learning Areas

As we come to the end of another significant year of success in all areas, including academically, the Principal Team is incredibly proud of the members of the Learning and Teaching Committee, especially for their support of our over 50 new teachers in 2023. At this time of year, Heads of Learning spend time reflecting with their teaching teams on what has gone well and where the areas for improvement are for 2024. Success in VCE is not the result of Year 12 teachers working hard – rather it is the result of teachers across the Years 7 – 12 spectrum working hard in teams to identify relevant curriculum areas of need at the appropriate time and supporting each other to meet those needs in their classes. Strong essay writing skills, for example, begin with relevant curriculum related skills being developed from Year 7. As teachers finish formal classes for the year and find out the subjects they will be teaching next year, there is a purposeful team planning being led across the school so that we can continue to meet (and maybe exceed) our strategic plan goals for 2024.

Wednesday 31 January – Students Return to School

Students will return to school on Wednesday 31 January to begin their formal classes. During mid-January, timetables will be made available for families to support their planning. It is important that all students arrive at school on the first day wearing the correct school uniform and the assistance of parents/carers is vital in ensuring these expectations are met. The details of the school uniform can be found on the school website under 'Policies A-Z'.

Uniforms can be purchased from the school's Second-Hand Uniform Shop or from Bob Stewart's of Kew. The second-hand uniform shop will open from 12pm – 2pm on the 24th and 25th of January in its usual location of the School Canteen. Thank you for your support and let us always have uniform Uniform.

Bell Times – 2024

Please note in 2024 there will be slight changes to our bell times to balance an earlier dismissal on Mondays and Fridays with our commitment to best support student engagement in co-curricular activities and provide our staff with collaborative planning and assessment time. As a consequence, there will be the slightly earlier dismissal time of 3pm on Monday and Friday and 3.15pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We look forward to fostering opportunities for all students to engage in the community through the array of clubs and committees on offer.

Congratulations to our Sub-Schools

We are thrilled with the way our students concluded the year at Balwyn High School. We congratulate them on their superb commitment to their studies and their positive engagement. The end of the year provides a great opportunity for reflection as they rest and reset for 2024.

We also want to acknowledge the significant role of the Student Management Team including the Sub-School Executive Teams, Student Learning Wellbeing Managers, and the Wellbeing Team. The team continues to advocate and support all community members throughout the year to engage positively and maximise their potential.

Andrew Corr, Tegan Knuckey, Julien Escurat and Hamish Anderson | Assistant Principals

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Learning To Be

A look back at the 1970s, bringing back so many memories

Save the Date: Saturday April 20th, 2024, come along to the reunion of the Class of 1974 to be held at Balwyn High School, more details to follow.





Justin Hong
Director of Senior School



Amee Duncan
Assistant Director of Senior School

Learning To Be

Concluding our VCE Ignition Programs and Farewelling our Year 10 Students

Year 10 and 11 students have completed Unit 1 and Unit 3 Ignition Programs in recent weeks and are to be congratulated upon the manner in which they have undertaken the first sessions in their VCE studies. They have recognised the significant advantage they have by completing the Ignition Program and the purpose and commitment has been evident throughout the Senior School learning spaces. Holiday homework for all subjects will be due in the first weeks of 2024. We are confident that students will enjoy completing these tasks which further prepare them for a productive year in which they are able to reach their potential.

While on Friday 1 December, we had the final Year 10 assembly for this year. Led superbly all year by our Year 10 Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers – Brian La and Dylan den Hartog, the assembly was all about reflecting on their first year in Senior School, acknowledging the growth in the cohort, and celebrating the achievements of 2023.

In the assembly we saw some insightful reflections from our Year 10 Captains – Christina Koutsoufritis and Gilbert O'Shaughnessy, and SRC representatives – Asha White and Marianna Freesz.

With a year that saw students develop their independence and continue growing, it was also fitting that a number of students were recognised for their successes in various academic and co-curricular competitions, alongside some teacher-voted, student-voted and SLWM-voted awards as well. It was a fitting conclusion to their Year 10 journey as these students now step into a full VCE program next year. On behalf of our community, I would also like to thank Dylan den Hartog and Brian La for their care and dedication to supporting this cohort through their first year in Senior School.

Senior School Outstanding Academic Achievement Awards

On Tuesday 5 December, the Senior School celebrated some remarkable achievements together with our school community on Presentation Night. There were many highlights for the Senior School as there have been throughout the year. The most Outstanding Achievement Awards in the Senior School were presented to:

William Zhu - Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Year 10

William was also the recipient of the following awards:

- Academic
- Monash Scholars

Elizabeth Ngodinhson - Cuthbert Moody Academic Excellence Award - Year 11

Elizabeth was also the recipient of the following awards:

- Academic
- Mathematical Methods Unit 3/4

Douglas Joshi - Harry Britain Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement - Year 12

Douglas was also the recipient of the following awards:

- French
- Specialist Mathematics
- Australian Defence Force Future Innovators Award
- Tuckwell Scholarship (Australian National University)
- Music

Wrapping Up 2023 – Empathy, Belonging, Connections

With 2023 drawing to a close, I look back on this as a tremendous year for our Senior School students. In recent final assemblies, I reflected on the first contact I had with each cohort and the simple messaging I provided emphasising the importance of building a team around you for our students embarking on a VCE journey. Knowing that it's not a voyage to be completed alone, I am proud of the way our students have embodied our school themes this year to demonstrate empathy during tough times, focusing on developing connections in and out of the classroom, and finding their sense of belonging to our wonderful community.

SENIOR SCHOOL REPORT Cont.

In a year filled with opportunities, I am thrilled with the way our students have embraced these and the growth that has occurred along the way. Our graduating class of 2023 have already found success in their own ways simply by completing their secondary education, but we have also certainly seen many remarkable achievements in their VCE results as well. For our students returning in 2024, I can only hope that we continue to build on the work this year to ensure that they also leave with pride and as future-ready citizens.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude and admiration for the Senior School Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers (SLWMs) Brian La, Dylan den Hartog, Chloe Erskine, Chris Triantafilopoulos, Bianca Prendergast and Viet Bui, who work so tirelessly to support our students all year. I am also very thankful of the broader Senior School team which includes Senior School Secretary Kathy Mouradian for her outstanding organisation and support throughout 2023, and to Assistant Director of Senior School Ameer Duncan, Director of Senior School Wellbeing Dani Cantor, and Learning Specialists for Senior School Engagement and Development – Paul Gear, for their wonderful leadership of our Senior School students this year.

Justin Hong | Director of Senior School
Ameer Duncan | Assistant Director of Senior School

CLASS OF 2023





Chris Land
Director of Middle School



Sylvie Tang
Assistant Director of Middle School

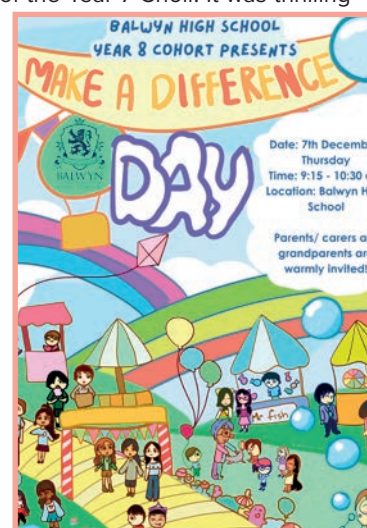
Learning To Be

Term 4 – Celebration and Community in the Middle School

It is always with a great sense of joy and pride that we reflect on the successes of the Middle School program in final few weeks of Term 4. As 2023 - the year of Empathy, Belonging and Connections - draws to a close, our three year-level themes of Our New Learning Community (Year 7), Making a Difference (Year 8) and My Middle School Experience: Past, Present and Future have each made a significant contribution to the mood of celebration which characterises our school community in Term 4.

Our Year 7 students have been hard at work for months refining and perfecting the wonderful Presentation Night Finale which concluded an uplifting night of acknowledgment and celebration. The Middle School Team was delighted to share in the achievements of Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 students through the Presentation Night Awards ceremony and we congratulate each and every student who was recognised for their individual successes and contributions. Our Year 7 students took centre stage at Hamer Hall, performing magnificently as part of the Year 7 Choir. It was thrilling to be able to share such a wonderful evening with an audience of parents, carers and other members of our school community.

This year, the highs of Presentation Night were followed later in Week 10 with the inaugural Year 8 Make a Difference Day. In Year 8, as part of the theme of Making a Difference, students have been focusing on building strong communities and considering the impact that they can make on the lives of others. The program culminated in last Thursday's event: a carnival for local Merrell Kinder and Balwyn North Primary School children, planned and delivered by our Year 8 cohort. Year 8 Tutorial classes had been working hard with their Tutorial teachers to conceptualise and to create a range of entertaining stalls offering games, competitions, crafts and challenges. With the SRC production-line handing out syrupy pancakes and Radio Club taking responsibility for the morning's playlist, the very first iteration of Make a Difference Day was a huge success.



Following the celebrations of Presentation Night and Make a Difference Day, formal lessons ended on Friday of the same week with students attending their final assemblies for 2023.

MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT Cont.

As an annual ritual, these final assemblies are symbolic events and the themes of belonging and connection ran through the speeches and performances for each event. Students heard from their outgoing Year-Level Captains, were introduced to their incoming Year-Level Captains and Student Leaders, were congratulated by the Assistant Principal for Middle School, Director of Middle School and their SLWM and watched the 2023 Balwyn High School Annual Highlights video and were treated to the 2023 Staff Lip Sync video.

To the surprise of Year 7 students and to the delight of Year 8 and Year 9 students, the final assemblies also featured the annual 'Staff Lip Sync Video', a strong Middle School Team tradition. In the video, staff from across the school could be seen dancing, harmonising and generally channelling their inner 90s popstars with a rendition of Backstreet Boys retro classic 'Larger than Life'. Congratulations to Year 7 Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers Shannon Blewitt and Mercedes Marsh, as well as Rein Kivivali, for their creative vision and work on the project.

In Week 11, the focus of the Middle School Team shifted to 2024 and to welcoming our incoming Year 7 students. On Thursday 2 December, the Middle School Team – supported by Principal Deborah Harman and Year 7 Captains Brian Tam and Ella Yap - presented to an audience of parents and carers at Year 6 into 7 Parent Information Night. The speakers on the evening were members of the Middle School Executive Team, including Assistant Principal Hamish Anderson, Director of Middle School Chris Land, Director of Wellbeing (Middle School) Sharon Gardner-Drumond, Assistant Director of Middle School Sylvie Tang, Year 7-10 Careers Counsellor Tanya McHenry and Learning Specialist for Middle School Engagement and Development Jack Stewart.

This week, we had our first opportunity to formally welcome our 2024 Year 7 cohort and to begin the work of shaping the culture and the community that will become so important for our new students as they commence their six-year Balwyn High School journey. Anxious parents waved their children off at the gates before students began the day with their first Balwyn High School assemblies. Students then engaged in some team-building activities and competitions with their Tutorial teachers, had a taste of a humanities lesson and were treated to a barbeque at lunch. Students were encouraged to explore their new school and to start to form relationships with other students in their Tutorial classes, as well as their new teachers. Students also had the opportunity to meet their Year 7 Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers – Brandon Jones and Katelyn Lusted, who will play a crucial role in supporting their transition into high school. The whole day was also superbly supported by our incoming STEP Leader Team, led by current Year 9 students Elisa Chong and Rafael Hutagalung.

Of course, with Semester Reports being published in Week 10, the events and highlights mentioned above are all taking place in a wider context which sees students continue to engage positively with meaningful learning opportunities right up until the end of term.

We believe that students who end the academic year well begin the following year well too; the past few weeks have provided any number of examples of ending strongly.



MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT Cont.

The Middle School Team is very much looking forward to the commencement of 2024, with all of the opportunities that the new year will bring. We wish all students, parents, carers and wider members of our school community a restful, safe and well-deserved break.

STEP Quiz Bowl + Round Up

The Student Transition Enhancement Program has been a vital support system for Year 7 students navigating their transition into high school this year. All contributions by STEP leaders this year, superbly led by STEP captains – Daniel Vu and Nethmi Sumanasekara certainly made a lasting impact on the Year 7 cohort.

One of the standout components to the success of this year's program has been the series of STEP events held outside of class time. These extracurricular activities have played a pivotal role in strengthening the connections among students, providing platforms for social interaction and team building. In Term 4, STEP leaders hosted their final event – The Year 7 & STEP Quiz Bowl. Congratulations to 7A who took out the winning titles, and well done to all students/ STEP leaders involved. Thank you to STEP Captains, Daniel and Nethmi's leadership in the success of these events in 2023.



Year 7 Wrap-up

To our departing Year 7 cohort and parents... It's so difficult to start any goodbye to a cohort without the cliché 'What a year!', but here we go. What a year for our incoming Year 7s. At the beginning of the year, we spoke into our theme of 'Our New Learning Community'. A community is a space that students get to create, and whilst the parents, teachers and school leaders around them play a role in supporting the construction of this community, it is our students who play the ultimate and most important role in deciding what values their community embody every day. This year our Year 7 students have led their community with kindness, resilience, and optimism.

Over the course of this year, we have used the Lion to report back on big moments, from Year 7 camp to our Tutorial competitions, to big wins in sport across the State and Region. These moments culminated last week in Presentation Night where we not only celebrated individual award winners, but the cohort in our Finale number. I could feel the pride in the room during that pivotal end of year tradition of being on stage at Hamer Hall, a moment that will live large in our memories as SLWMs for years to come. But of course, as we've said again and again, it's the small moments where our Year 7 cohort show us who they are. It's walking around our school yard and seeing the confidence and enthusiasm in which our Year 7s greet their teachers. It's the frequency in which we hear students say to each other "You did so well at..." "You looked great when you...". It's the way that no sad or hurt student ever walks to the sick bay or the SLWM office alone. This is a cohort that turns up for each other.

As our time as Year 7 SLWMS comes to an end we'd like to express our gratitude for the time we've had leading and supporting 2023's Year 7s. It was a privilege to come to work and interact with students who brought joy and humour to our day, every day. We know this is a cohort that has many achievements ahead of it, and we're so proud to have played a role in such an important chapter. We'll pass our role onto 2024's SLWMS Bethany Shearwood-Boyd and Diana Kelly knowing they are in very safe hands.

As a final gesture, we'd like to end our reflection with the reflections our incredible 2023 Year 7 Captains Ella Yap and Brian Tam. Ella and Brian both spoke very eloquently at our final assembly and we would like to include some their commentary below:

It all began on the 30 of January, and now 313 days later, it is now the end of our year 7. What a year this has been. Since the first day of year 7 and now the end, this year has been anything but underwhelming. It has been opportunistic, optimistic, original, and even a bit obscure. And each and every person in this room has faced their own challenges, but nevertheless we pushed on. Together we have experienced and grown so much, as both a cohort, and individuals.

MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT Cont.

So give yourselves a pat on the back, and a gigantic round of applause, because you guys deserve it. You have made me honoured and proud, as we evolved to become what I would say is BHS's best cohort. But of course this year could have never been this amazing without our teachers. Working over time for us, so as we walk out of this theatre, say thank you. And celebrate the end of 2023, the conclusion of our last few minutes of year 7. Because you've made it! We've made it!

Ella Yap | Year 7 Captain

It feels like just yesterday we stepped into the school, wide-eyed and full of excitement. And here we are, on the last day of our first year in high school. What an incredible journey it has been! This year has passed by so quickly, but every day has been nothing but fun, exciting, optimistic, and entirely unexpected. Over this year, we've each challenged ourselves in ways that have shaped us into the individuals we are now. Each of us has faced unique challenges, but together, we've grown stronger and more resilient. Let's take a moment to acknowledge our achievements, big and small. Every step forward, no matter how small, has contributed to our collective success. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your hard work, courage and dedication.

Brian Tam | Year 7 Captain

Mercedes Marsh and Shannon Blewitt | Year 7 Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers

Year 8 Wrap-up

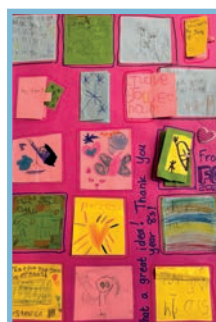
It has been a big year for Year 8 students as they have embodied this year's theme of Make A Difference. They have engaged positively in their communities and with one another and grown into respectful and compassionate young people.

There have been so many highlights, including the Make a Difference Tour to the MCG and Ceres, Tutorial competitions, year level assemblies, Presentation Night, season concerts, as well significant success in sporting competitions!



The biggest highlight for us was the Make a Difference Day that took place last Thursday. It was the culmination of a whole term's worth of work, in which the Year 8s collaborated in the lead up to the day in their Tutorial classes to plan, develop and execute ideas for stalls to entertain and delight young people from Merrell St Kinder, and Balwyn North Primary School.

It can be hard to realise the impact that you are having on others, and sometimes it is important to be reminded of that. The thank-you cards that arrived from the students at Merrell St Kinder, and Balwyn North Primary School was a salient reminder of how much of a difference these Year 8 students are making in their community.



MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT Cont.

Sitting in the final assembly last Friday, we were in awe of the way the Year 8 students have developed and grown this year. The respect and supportiveness for each other that this group demonstrated in that final assembly was indicative of the development and maturity that they have experienced, and we were delighted to end the year in such a positive way.

Year 8 is always going to be a year of change and maturity, as students meet new people in their year level, discover their interest and passions through electives for the first time, join a range of clubs and committees, and start to think about pathways for future years.

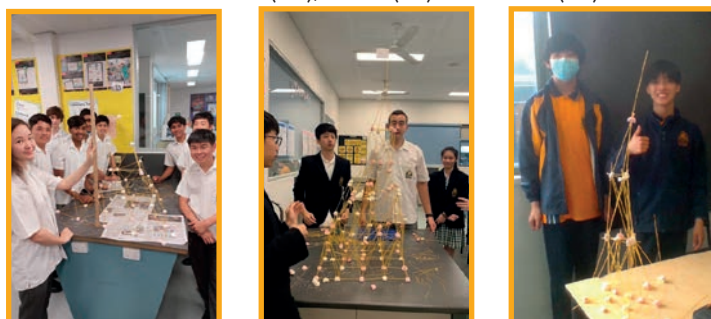
With this change, there can be challenges. But what we have been most impressed by this year is the enthusiasm and optimism with which these challenges have been handled by this cohort. From the development of maturity that we have seen the year, we know that this cohort is ready to be the leaders of Middle School next year and be the role models for the younger year levels.

Finally, being a SLWM can be challenging, but when you are leading a cohort of students who are passionate, funny, and kind, it makes all the hard parts worth it. Although we will miss supporting this cohort, we know the Year 8s will be in safe hands with Jack Stewart, and Ally Green as Year 9 SLWMs next year, and can't wait to see what they do next year as the leaders of Middle School.

Phoebe Hutson and Jed Miller | Year 8 Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers

Year 9 Wrap-up

Our final Tutorial competition of the year required the students to get creative and build the tallest freestanding tower using only uncooked spaghetti and Marshmallows. As you can see in the images below our students were able to work collaboratively to achieve some very impressive results. Our top 3 results included a tower of 110cm (9N), 119cm (9S) and 132cm (9K).



As 2024 draws to a close, we would like to acknowledge all of the efforts and contributions of our cohort throughout this year.

What makes our cohort truly special and unique is the diversity among the skills, interests and contributions that they offer to the school community every day. On our most recent Presentation Night, we were filled with pride to witness so many of our students be recognised for their outstanding academic, sporting and musical achievements. However, in our role as SLWMs we know that so much growth occurs in those seemingly small everyday moments that students experience.

Whether that be through achieving personal goals such as presenting at assemblies, joining a new club or committee, establishing a new social connection, or simply supporting a friend through a challenging time, we would like to acknowledge the myriad of ways in which our cohort has grown this year. We strive to support our cohort in challenging times or adversity, but what has been most inspiring to witness is the way they have support each other to be the best they can be.

It has been an honour to work alongside our cohort and support them as they have established themselves as leaders of the Middle School. We are so immensely proud of the way they have embraced the opportunities they have been presented with this year, from beginning to make decisions that will shape their future pathways through to navigating their first round of examinations. We wish them all the best as they embark on their Senior School journeys in 2024.

Brandon Jones and Bethany Shearwood-Boyd | Year 9 Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers

MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT Cont.

Middle School Student of the Week

The Middle School Student of the week is an award given to students for their positive contributions to the Balwyn High School community. This award is decided by the relevant Student Learning and Wellbeing Managers (SLWMs). The students are celebrated by an email to their families, outlining the specific contribution they have made. Well done to all of the students who have received this award. The winners for Week 9 and 10 of Term 4 are below:



Mohamad | Year 7

Mohamad received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by his teacher. Mohamad showed exceptional leadership in class by being inclusive.



Lisara | Year 7

Lisara received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by her teacher. Lisara showed initiative and great leadership in her tutorial class when curating their lipsync video.



Ethan | Year 8

Ethan received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by the Year 8 SLWMs. Ethan supported members of the community during Presentation Night rehearsals.



Henry | Year 8

Henry received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by the Year 8 SLWMs. Henry represented the school in the Australian Mathematics Competition and received an award. Great work, Henry!



Hannah | Year 8

Hannah received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by her teacher. Hannah consistently encouraged all primary school students to participate in her tutorial class stall during the Make a Difference Day.



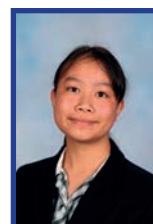
Eason | Year 9

Eason received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by the Year 9 SLWMs. Eason was the best-performing student in the school at the Australian Mathematics Competition. He was also in the top 0.3% of the state. Well done, Eason!



Lucas and Ella | Year 9

Lucas and Ella received Middle School Student of the Week after being nominated by their teacher. Lucas and Ella role modelled the shared learning norms and consistently apply their best efforts in class.



Chris Land | Director of Middle School
Sylvie Tang | Assistant Director of Middle School



Dani Cantor
Director of Senior
School Wellbeing

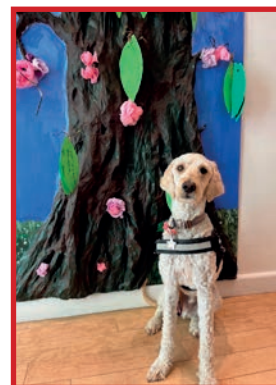


Sharon Gardner-Drummond
Director of Middle
School Wellbeing



Gough
House Wellbeing Dog

Learning To Be



Holiday best wishes from the Wellbeing Team

The Wellbeing Team wishes our school community the very best over the end of year break. We are very grateful to be part of such a vibrant and inclusive school community and are honoured to have been able to work with so many students, families and staff over the course of 2023.

We look forward to seeing you all again and meeting our newest community members at the commencement of the 2024 academic year, when we will welcome Psychologist, Lauren Byrne back into the team.

Happy holidays,

Dani Cantor, Lincoln Kealy, Jeff Lampard, Parnoon Moradi, John Noonan, Sharon Gardner-Drummond, Bridget Watt and Gough.

Holiday Self Care

After a long school year, the final holiday break, for many, is a welcome relief. However, the reality does not always meet the expectations and this can leave us with feelings of dis-ease or disappointment. While breaks from routine can be a very effective way of recharging and preparing for the upcoming year, it is not healthy to throw all sense of routine and order out of the window. Retaining some semblance of normalcy provides us with a psychologically safe framework in which we can truly relax and refresh in preparation for 2024.

Some suggestions to strike the balance these holidays:

1. Let go of negative emotions, stress and discomfort by talking it out with a trusted confidant.
2. Make healthy nutrition choices most of the time.
3. Create time for self care – be deliberate about this.
4. Practice mindfulness in a way that works for you – it might be meditating, it might be walking. Find your space.
5. Be active
6. Say no
7. Get enough sleep
8. Stay hydrated
9. Take action – do the 'have tos' straight away and get them off your mental load.
10. Smile – even when you don't feel like it.
11. Be intentional with your time – don't lose hours and days scrolling mindlessly through your devices.
12. Make a gratitude list
13. Ditch the perfection mentality
14. Set achievable goals.

And remember, self-care needs an investment of time and mind, not money.

Wellbeing Support over the Holiday period

Holidays can be a challenging time emotionally and this is only exacerbated by the high expectations that society sets for these times. Should parents and carers feel overwhelmed during the break by either their own needs or that of the young people, the following supports are available:



THE WELLBEING TEAM Cont.

- Parent Line, 13 22 89, provide free unlimited counselling 1800 22 89, with trained counsellors and parents can request the same clinician when they call
- Headspace have partnered with Monash Uni for 'Partners in Parenting' online program ([Partners in Parenting \(headspace.org.au\)](https://partnersinparenting.headspace.org.au/)), provides 10 modules to complete (self-paced) covering common parenting challenges, such as communication, managing strong emotions, boundaries, conflicts and staying involved in young person's life while they navigate their independence
- E-headspace also available for parents/caregivers, [Online & phone support | headspace](https://onlineandphone.support.headspace.org.au/)

In the event of a wellbeing crisis, we also encourage to reach out to the following resources:

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au

- e-headspace: <https://www.eheadspace.org.au/>
- Headspace Hawthorn: 03 9006 6500
<https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/hawthorn/>
- Connected Space <http://www.connectedspace.com.au/>
- Reach Out <http://au.reachout.com/>

In an emergency please contact:

- Emergency: 000
- Boroondara Police: 03 8851 1111

Respectful Relationships

Congratulations to our Tuning into Teens graduates

Many thanks to Lincoln and Parnoon for their work in providing this valuable course and establishing important relationships with families from across our school community. Keep an eye on NewsFeed to see when courses will be offered in 2024.



Volunteer opportunity for the headspace Hawthorn & headspace Malvern Youth Advisory Group (YAG) for 2024

Position Description: <https://bit.ly/46DxAkA>

Application Form: <https://bit.ly/3yM5JBc>

Role description:

'Are you aged between 16 to 24? Are you passionate about mental health and wellbeing? Do you want to get involved in your local community? Apply to join the headspace Hawthorn & headspace Malvern Youth Advisory Group in 2024!

headspace Hawthorn & headspace Malvern are looking for passionate, creative and motivated young people who live, work or study in Boroondara, Stonnington, Whitehorse, Manningham and surrounding areas.

As part of the YAG, you will represent headspace Hawthorn & headspace Malvern at community engagement activities. By getting involved, you will:

Attend regular community events and activities

Work with other members on YAG-led projects

Assist with delivering presentations and workshops at schools and universities

Provide input and feedback on headspace services, processes and initiatives

And much more!

Want to apply or find out more? Please read the position description before completing the application form.

If you have any questions, reach out to Sara.Hanna@accesshc.org.au

Applications close on Monday 8th January at 11:59pm.

THE WELLBEING TEAM Cont.

Lessons from around the world for a meaningful life

Abridged and adapted from <https://tinybuddha.com/blog/10-unique-lessons-from-across-the-globe-for-a-meaningful-life/>

1. India: Jivivisha – The Joy for Life

A strong desire to live life to the fullest.

2. The Netherlands: Niksen - The Art of Doing Nothing

The idea is to come out of the “high-efficiency” mentality and embrace some moments of “wasting time.” The moment we try to make it into a “thing to do,” a way to relax or meditate, its effect dwindles with the idea that there is a goal to attain. Niksen is a way of combatting stress.

3. Norway: Friluftsliv - The Love of the Outdoors

Friluftsliv is beneficial to physical health because it often involves exercise, but the mental benefits are just as important.

4. Denmark: Hygge - Cozy Comfort, Deep Connection

In the midst of life’s complexities, finding solace in the simplicity of a cozy ambiance and cherished companionship can nourish our souls and ease the burdens of the day. It’s about savouring the moment, finding joy in the ordinary, and embracing the warmth of human connection.

5. China: Wu Wei - Effortless Flow, Harmonious Living

Wu Wei is about trusting in the wisdom of the unfolding moment and find peace in the midst of chaos. It has been translated into a few different terms, including “non-action”, “non-doing”, “non-forcing” and “effortless action”. Wu Wei encourages people to relinquish the ego and our attachment to it, acting without a sense of self or a concrete plan in order to feel a greater connection to the world.

6. Greece: Meraki - Infusing Passion into Life’s Tapestry

Meraki teaches us that in passionate engagement, stress transforms into purpose, and every moment becomes a masterpiece.

7. Sweden: Gökotta - Awakening with the Dawn’s Tranquility

It’s about embracing the stillness of the early hours, listening to the world awakening around us, especially the birds. Gökotta teaches us the art of starting the day in tranquility, setting a harmonious tone for what lies ahead.

8. Italy: Dolce Far Niente - Embracing Sweet Idleness

The luxury of time unfilled, and the sheer bliss found in the simplicity of existence, is a reminder that sometimes the most meaningful moments occur when we allow ourselves to simply be, unburdened by the demands of the world.

9. Spain: Sobremesa - Cultivating Connection, One Conversation at a Time

The art of lingering at the table after finishing a meal and cherishing the warmth of meaningful conversations. Sobremesa reminds us that in the unhurried moments after a meal, bonds are deepened, laughter is shared, and stress fades away. It’s a practice that celebrates the richness of human connections, reminding us that in genuine conversations, we find solace and understanding.

10. Puerto Rico: Acurrucarse: The Coziness of Cuddling

Acurrucarse refers to cuddling with loved ones. It often describes cuddling with one’s children or pets, or watching a film on a sleepover with cozy blankets. It is a term laden with subtle nuances, encapsulating the essence of togetherness.

Dani Cantor | Director of Senior School Wellbeing
Sharon Gardner-Drummond | Director of Senior School Wellbeing



Teaghan Gibson
Director of Music



Melanie White
Assistant Director of
Music



Emily Caracella
Assistant Director of
Music

Learning To Be

What a spectacular showcase of music we had at Presentation Night for 2023! A true celebration of all that students from across the school community have achieved in a hugely successful year. A true highlight each and every year for our music students is the opportunity to perform on the stage at Hamer Hall; an opportunity that many professional musicians aspire to, and one that our students are honoured to experience. It is true that every Presentation Night I experience has me feeling the same amount of joy that I felt back at my very first Presentation Night 12 years ago.

As a Music program, the significance of such an opportunity to showcase all that we stand for, to connect with the broader school community, to share in making music, and to celebrate the contributions of so many students within our program is certainly one that we do not take for granted. We are grateful to be a school where music is celebrated, championed, and a key feature of the tapestry of experiences for our students.

Across the evening, the audience experienced a range of performances showcasing ensembles in the music program. The first by our Symphony Orchestra, lead superbly by Dave Howes, in the time-honoured tradition of the Academic Procession.



Performances by the Concert Choir, led by Melanie White, brought a welcome return for this ensemble as an item to the Hamer Hall stage. Their performance of 'Northern Lights' was breathtaking, considered, and provided an experience for the audience reminiscent of listening to music in world-renowned cathedrals.

'Elegie' by Tchaikovsky, performed by the Senior String Orchestra, was highly expressive and nuanced, captivating the audience. Congratulations to Alexandra Hiew for her superb work with this ensemble in preparation for this performance, and to Paul Jones for his continued work with this ensemble across the year.



MUSIC Cont.

The Symphonic Band reins were handed to Emily Caracella during term 4, leading a spectacular performance of the classic 'Fly me to the Moon', once again showcasing the strength of wind and percussion players within the program.



Mal Sedergreen's arrangement of 'Sunshine of your Love' and 'Late in the evening' provided a moment for the energy of Black Orpheus to shine, featuring solos from the year 12 students who have made such significant contributions to the ensemble across the year.



Congratulations to all students who performed on the evening. The contributions of each and every one of you mattered, and your dedication to the evening was evident in the way that you presented, developed your understanding of the music, and acknowledgement that knowing your part is only part of the story – what makes magic in music is the moment where the individual musical lines come together, and that happens when we rehearse together.



MUSIC Cont.

Congratulations also to all of our student soloists whose courage, bravery and commitment to the spectacular finale cannot be understated: Hannah Estores (Waltzing Matilda), Nenah Jones (Born to Try), and to Isaiah Chin (Tenor Saxophone) and Eric Qiu (Guitar) for their spectacular features in 'Move on Up'!

While we say a fond farewell to our Year 12 students, we know that your legacy ensures that the program is in wonderful hands as our Year 11 students become the leaders of the music program.

Student Leadership in Music: Congratulations and Thank-you to our 2023 Music Captains!

As we prepare to welcome our 2024 student leaders, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Kushe, Douglas, Amy and Eric as Music Captains from 2023. These students have lead the program with pride and poise, always looking for opportunities to build the musical experiences of every student in the program. Their contributions to the inaugural Ensemble Leadership Forum in inspiring, motivating and building the leadership of leaders across the program becomes their legacy.

Celebrating AMEB Results

Students from across the music program undertook AMEB practical examinations on their instruments across Term 4. Results have been released for all of our students in what is another spectacular year of progress, determination, resilience and success for instrumentalists.

All students are to be congratulated for the courage displayed in sitting for these examinations. Well done, everyone!

Spotlight: It's Christmas!

Christmas songs have certainly been echoing through the Music Department over recent weeks. Jingle bells was early as early as October this year! But as instrumental music lessons begin to wrap up for the year, one of the great joys that our students experience is connecting with others through music-making.

Our vocal students have been working to learn Christmas Songs as duets, with many students performing during a lunch time outside the AM Rogers Hall to build the Christmas spirit.

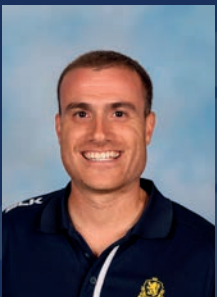
Similarly, students within the brass program have been coming together to learn Christmas tunes and engaging in small ensembles to ensure that musical skills continue to develop through these fun experiences.



Teaghan Gibson | Director of Music



Shaun Bowes
Director of Health,
Outdoor, Physical
Education and Sport



Paul Mirabella
Assistant Director of
Sport



Dusanka Devic
Assistant Director of
Health and Physical
Education



Tim Richardson
Assistant Director
Outdoor Programs

Learning To Be

The year has come to an end for Health, Outdoor, Physical Education and Sport. This year we've had highly engaged students throughout our programs that has resulted in great learning outcomes for all. We've planned and facilitated an extensive range of incursions, excursions, and camps that has greatly enriched the learning experience of our students. Our students are continuing to access our high-level curriculum that is allowing them to develop their knowledge and understanding of key focus areas.

Health and Physical Education

I'd like to congratulate all students for their engagement in Health and PE classes this year, but I'd like to put the spotlight on our VCE programs. All students and staff should be commended for their exceptional VCAA results, including terrific examination results and study scores. I'd like to congratulate the three students who achieved a 50-study score, and their outstanding teachers who contributed to this success.

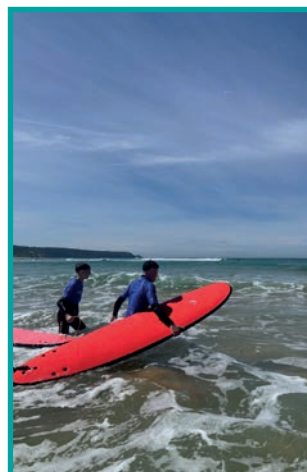
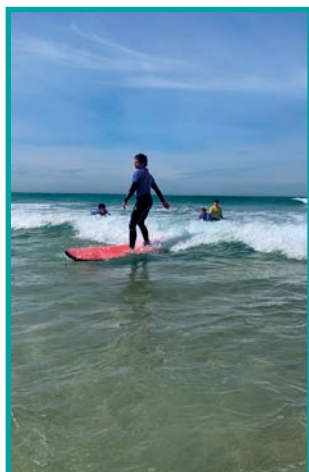
We've also seen an increase in the median study scores for both subjects and we look forward to this continuing to rise over the years to come. We're proud of all students for their results and thank them for opting to select a subject that will allow them to flourish.

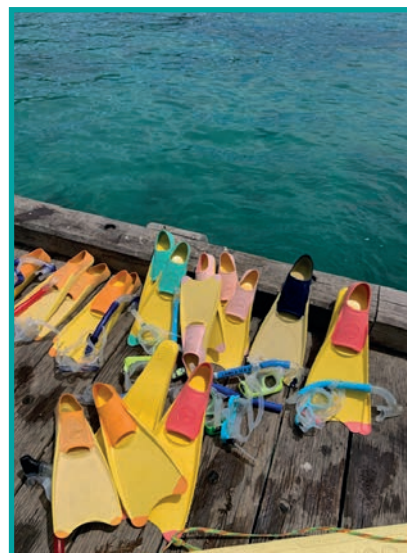
Thank you to Dusanka Devic for her terrific support of our Health and Physical Education program at Balwyn High School. Her leadership of Health and PE has allowed our students to receive the highest quality curriculum possible, has allowed students to immerse themselves into a range of opportunities, and has contributed to the growth of our staff members.

Outdoor Programs

Our Outdoor Programs have concluded for 2023, with the Year 9 Surf and Snorkel excursion being our last excursion. Students were given exposure to coastal environments, water safety and surfing skills. They were introduced to the changing relationships that have occurred with outdoor environments over time and were able to observe some of the human impacts that have resulted due to human use. Students were provided with wetsuits and foam surfboards and then got to participate in snorkelling. The students were lucky enough to see a stingray while snorkelling and were able to explore other marine life.

I'd like to thank Tim Richardson for his tremendous planning, support, and organisation of our Outdoor Programs. This year, we've seen so many students engaged in outdoor activities and the Unit 3 and 4 Outdoor and Environmental Studies students also obtained some exceptional VCE results that they should be proud. Tim's support and guidance of the VCE students in and outside of the classroom has been outstanding. Congratulations to all students for their success in VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies.





Sport Results

This year we've seen participation rates increase in Sport, many sport awards, state championships, a national championship, and students developing camaraderie both in Sport Education and during Interschool Sport. Here's a snippet of our achievements:

- 8 State Championships
- 5 State Runners Up
- 1 National Championship
- 3 Back-to-back Championships
- 20 Broken Records

Thank you to Paul Mirabella, Jane Diazikis, Linda Gordon, and all Sport Coaches for their support this year. Paul Mirabella's fantastic leadership within Sport and Sport Education has allowed our students and staff to participate in a high-quality sport program that accommodates for high ability learners and students who are beginners within Sport. In addition to this, Paul is the Division Coordinator and has facilitated the Division Interschool Sport events, including the big three carnivals.

I'd like to recognise the excellent administration support from Jane and Linda that plays a significant role in the success of our students and their contributions do not go unnoticed by the broader school community.

Finally, thank you to the entire Balwyn High School community, including the students, parents/guardians, staff, community stakeholders, and volunteers for the support of our HOPES programs in 2023.

Shaun Bowes | Director of Health, Outdoor, Physical Education, and Sport



Simon Maher
Director of Mathematics



Rikara Ahmat
Director of Science



Amanda Clarke
Assistant Director
of Mathematics and
Science

Learning To Be

STEAM Club update: RACI Crystal Growing Competition 2023

Eager science students used their lunchtimes throughout term 2 this year to carefully prepare and nurture a growing crystal! Students enjoyed the hands-on activity in the lab preparing their chemical solutions and watching their crystals grow. Students also had to prepare a written report to enter the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI) Crystal Growing Competition 2023.

Congratulations to the following students who participated either individually or as a team:

- Stuart Joshi, Theodore Wang and Max Findlay (Year 7)
- Lyanne Zhang (Year 9), Abigail John (Year 9), Bernice Tam (Year 9)
- Roveenaa Balendran (Year 9)
- Ju-Ya Tsai (Year 8), Senuli Wijayabandara (Year 8) and Noelle Tan (Year 8)
- Hannah Roscoe, Amaia Mercer, Jolyna Guo (Year 8), Yasmine Litsas (Year 8)
- Jaymee Walker (Year 9)
- Nicole Chen, Shwen Chong (STEAM Captains) and Hayley Gao (STEAM Ambassador) (Year 12)

We had some beautiful crystals that were created by students. One was so amazing that it won the Best Crystal prize of all year 7-12 student entries in Victoria!

Congratulations to Jaidon Wang (Year 11) for growing and winning the Best Crystal in Victoria!

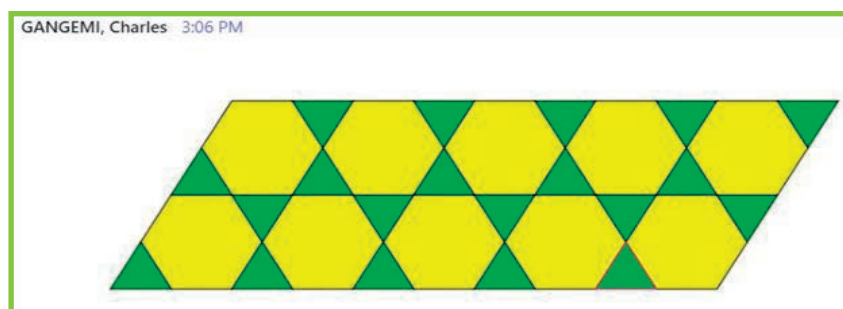


Tessellations

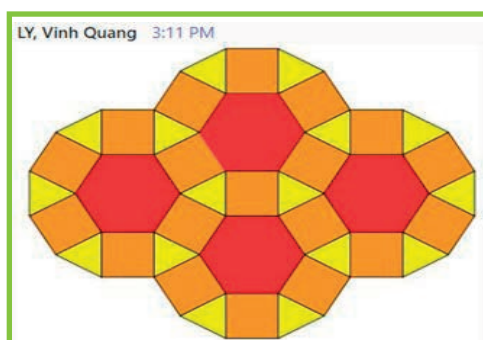
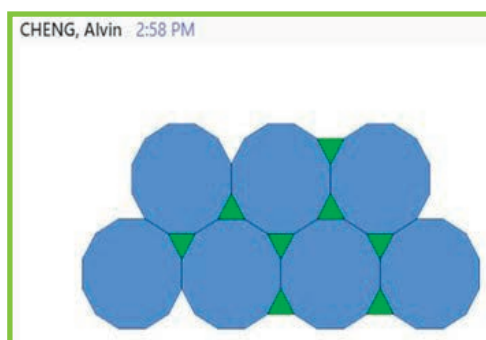
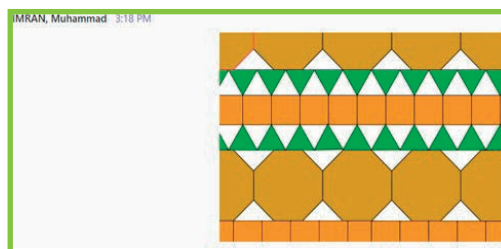
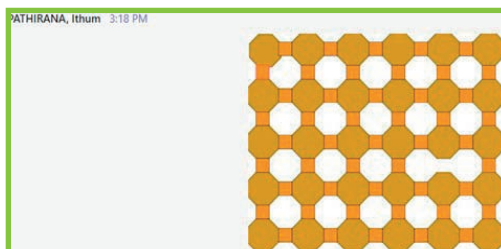
In Year 7 Maths, students have been learning about tessellations. These wonderful patterns made from repeating shapes have been used since ancient times to create magnificent artworks, in architecture and are a feature of much of the natural world.

In class, students learned the difference between regular and irregular tessellations. As part of their research, students learnt to recognise the difference between translation, reflection and rotational symmetry in tessellations. Students learnt that you can also create 3 dimensional tessellations!

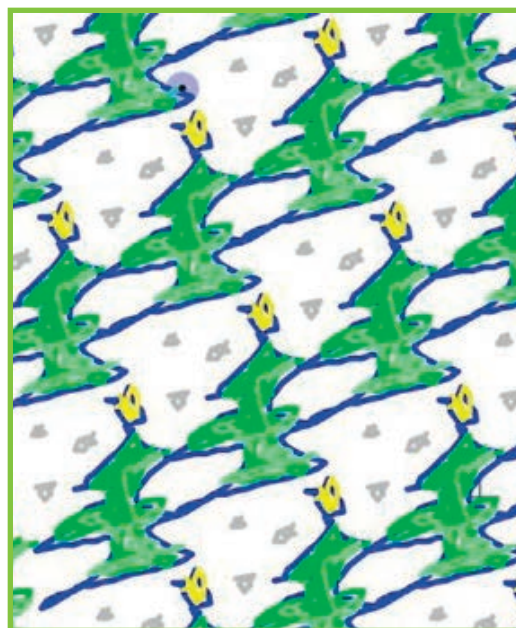
They practiced constructing their own tessellations using physical tools, as well as utilising a variety of digital tools. Some examples of student creations are below.



MATHEMATICS & SCIENCE Cont.



Sophia G



Chloe Y

Simon Maher | Director of Mathematics

Rikara Ahmat | Director of Science

Amanda Clarke | Assistant Director of Mathematics and Science

VISUAL ARTS



Nicole Houlihan
Acting Director of Visual Arts

Learning To Be

Visual Arts - Excellence Awards

The Visual Arts faculty would like to acknowledge students who not only excel academically but also embody Balwyn High school values and learning norms through collaboration and creativity.

These awards recognise students in visual art, media and visual communication design who go beyond the classroom sharing ideas and enhancing the learning environment. Congratulations to the following students for their valuable contribution to our shared learning experience.

Year 7

Yang Yang Zhang, Irisa Ma, Kalinda Stewart, Yayuan Peng, Milly Mostyn-Lutton, Silvy Dankourian, Jae Hao Chan, Isabella Thuring, Mingze Chen, Alia von Sturmer, Claire Wilson, Mona Khosravi, Casey Ding, Kei Jayaputera

Year 8

Art - Ellie Campbell, Harmony Lee

Media - Khai Tang

Year 9

Art - Blake Lian

Media - Tiffany Chang, Evangeline Korte

VCD - Sunny Liang, Kaitlyn Young

3D Art - Lyanne Zhang, Sofia Loseto-Median

Year 10

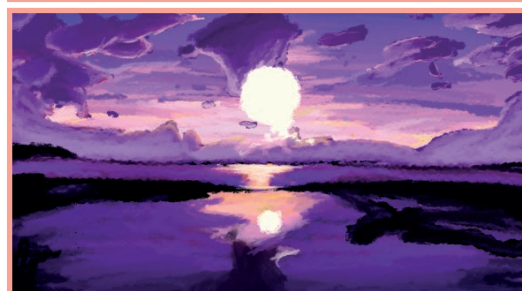
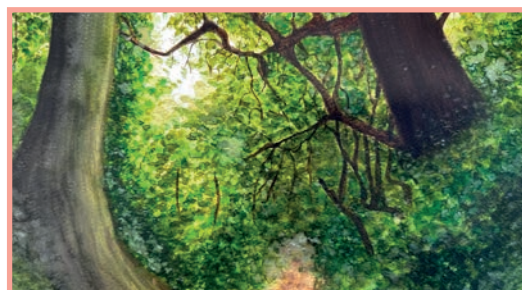
Art - Judy Wu

3D Art - Aleezay Babar, Matthias Yuen

VCD - Antony Zhu, Rei Yi Tan

Photography - Valerie Chan, Alicia Yeung

Media - Zahra Ziani, Haris Strumer



Khai 3 Media 3



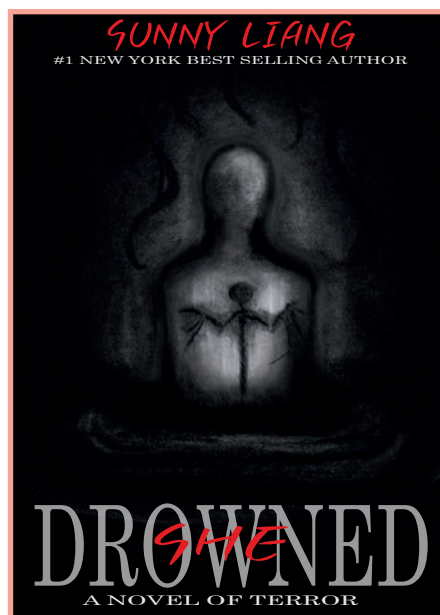
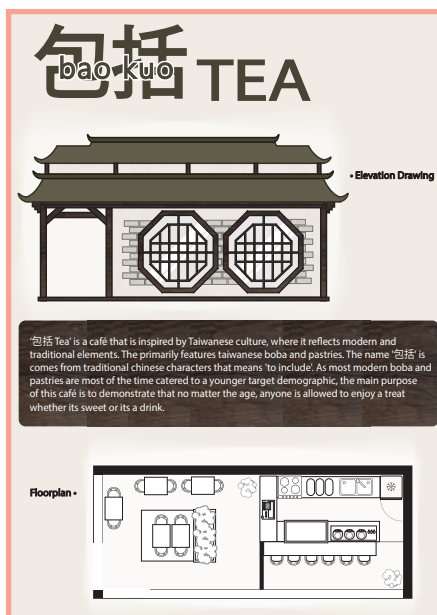
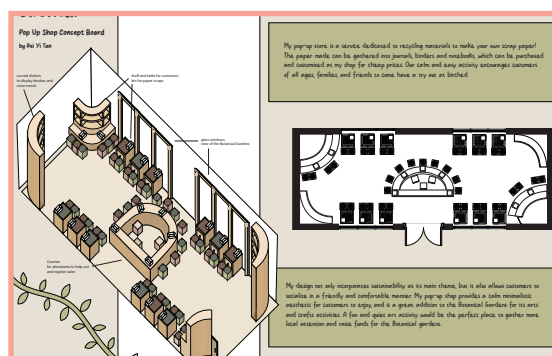
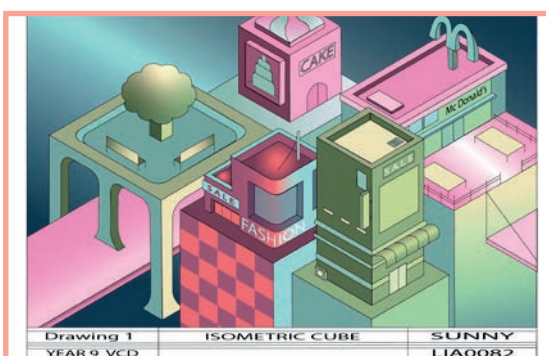
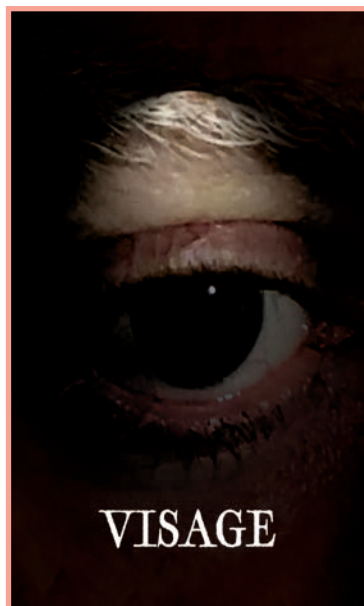
Khai 3 Media 2



Khai 3 Media 1



VISUAL ARTS Cont.

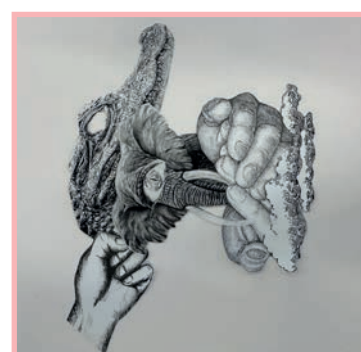
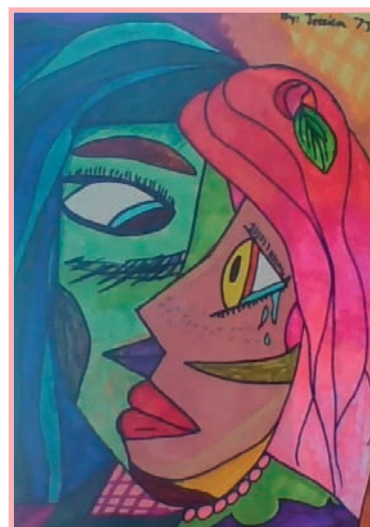


VISUAL ARTS Cont.

Classroom Focus: Year 7 Art

Year 7s have been learning all about art styles from Impressionism to Pop Art and everything in between. After researching art movements and art rebellions, students created their own works in each style. Below are some examples of Cubism, Impressionism, Surrealism and Pop Art. Can you match the image to the style?

Marie Grant and Zea Caligiuri | Art Teachers



Nicole Houlihan | Acting Director of Visual Arts



Jane Gibson
Director of Humanities



Brooke Jacobs
Assistant Director of
Humanities

Learning To Be

Reflecting on 2023 in Humanities

This year in Humanities has been one to remember. This year Humanities our classroom teachers have continued to foster student engagement and create connections to the world beyond the classroom via excursion and incursion opportunities which are purposeful and insightful. From Geography fieldwork in Balwyn North to visiting the Jewish Holocaust Museum and interviewing a Holocaust survivor, our students have successfully participated and actively co-constructed their learning through lived, collaborative experiences.

In addition, our students have triumphed in external competitions and academic opportunities to display their passion for Humanities related concepts and knowledge.



Jane Gibson | Director of Humanities

Spotlight on Economics in Year 7 and 8 Humanities

Our Year 7 and 8 Humanities students have recently completed microunits on Economics as part of their Humanities studies.

Year 7 Humanities students have extended their knowledge of water management by analysing how water is allocated in the Murray Darling Basin. Students developed their critical thinking skills by considering how the management of water in the Murray-Darling Basin impacts different stakeholders.

Year 8 Humanities students have applied economics to their studies of Landforms and Landscapes by planning a social enterprise. In this task students collaborated to create an innovative product, develop business objectives and brainstorm how their business could support an environmental cause. Each group then presented their business idea in a 'pitch' to the class.

Brooke Jacobs | Assistant Director of Humanities

Circle of viewpoints

ACTIVITY 4

Each learning team will be allocated one stakeholder who is impacted by the management of water in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Your learning team will answer the following question and share your response with the class.

You are encouraged to refer back to specific information covered this lesson to justify your perspective.

- › Farmer
- › Environmental activist
- › Animal rights activist
- › Person living along the Murray-Darling Basin
- › Local resident who uses the rivers for swimming and fishing
- › Australian government

The quality of the water in the Murray-Darling Basin matters to me because...
(consider both social and economic impacts)

I am concerned about...

5 minutes to
discuss in
learning team

5 minutes to
share with
the class

HUMANITIES Cont.

Trading and Market Day – ‘Consumer of the 21st Century’

In what has become a bi-annual tradition, our Year 9 ‘Consumers of the 21st Century’ concluded their Semester by applying their newfound understanding of consumerism, trade and negotiation for maximum profit at their ‘Trading and Market Day’. Working in teams representing different countries, students were given resources and currency to create and trade goods with one another over the preceding two weeks, with the ultimate challenge of achieving the highest profit. This culminated in the final ‘Trading and Market Day’ on Wednesday 6 December where the students created stalls to sell their wares to the expert negotiators within our teaching and ES teams, as well as visiting students from other classes.

The ultimate victory and prize went to the successful ‘Team USA’, represented by Bill Bai, Lila Brown, Heidi Chuah, Simrin Dullet, Ada Liu, Annabelle Nguyen-Le, Bernice Tam, Felix Tan and Elise Taylor. But activities such as this benefit all students involved, teaching them valuable skills that will help them as real-world consumers, in a fun and collaborative environment where they work together to achieve a common goal. Thank you to the students and staff for making this iteration the most successful yet, and a highlight for Middle-School Humanities.



Stuart Brown and Lina Lim | ‘Consumer of the 21st Century’ Teachers



Amy Wood
Director of English and
Literacy



Orah Rothberg
Assistant Director of
English and Literacy

Learning To Be

Year 9 English

Term 4 has seen our students take to our film study unit with Scorsese-like passion. With the referendum just gone, it felt appropriate to be studying Aussie dramedy *The Sapphires* (2012). Based on real events it follows the story of an all-Indigenous girl group as they perform for US troops in the Vietnam War. Our students genuinely enjoyed this heartwarming story of sibling rivalry, civil rights, and the universal need for belonging. Over the 6 week unit we explored the myriad ways directors use cinematography to create meaning and impact their audience. Students can be seen here making short films of their own in small groups. They were encouraged to manipulate camera shots and angles to give a feeling of power or vulnerability to their 'characters'. We didn't find the next Kate Winslet, but we certainly enjoyed the process!

In the later half of Term 4 students entered the revision and exam phase of the year. This was their first experience of exams and is designed to familiarise them with the process and provide opportunities to practice working in exam conditions. The Year 9 cohort is to be congratulated on conducting themselves in such a mature and respectful manner across what can often be a stressful time. The students approach to both the revision lessons and the exams was very pleasing. See them here excitedly awaiting their English exam!



Oliver Morris and Bethany Shearwood-Boyd | Year 9 English Teachers

Year 7 Poetry

This term in Year 7 English, students have been writing and presenting a whole range of different types of poetry. Students studied and experimented with a range of poetic styles, including free verse, slam, haiku and cinquain. It has been wonderful to watch students' creativity shine and their courage grow as they presented their poems to their peers and reflected on the feedback from their learning teams. The unit is designed to cultivate students' creative self-expression through the freedom that poetry allows, fostering and encouraging their creativity as they explored a range of styles and personal themes relevant to them. Furthermore, the unit is intended to also develop their courage and confidence in public speaking and performing as throughout the unit they presented numerous times in front of their peers, using prosodic features for intentional effect to enhance the meaning in their poetry.



Forest

- Forest
- In the forest, where trees grow tall,
- A realm that is hidden from us all.
- Golden sticky sap leaks slowly from the trees,
- A small cold breeze
- Where knobby roots grow underfoot,
- And spider twines that has been hooded.
- By the glimpse of green,
- But to his dismay, the grey flew away.
- In the forest, where trees grow tall,
- A realm that is hidden from us all.
- The forest is really an amazing place,
- That a sanctuary of grace.



ENGLISH

The quality of poems students created is a testament to their maturity and their willingness to take risks with their writing. Congratulations to all our Year 7 students on an outstanding year of English, culminating in a beautiful personal collection of poetry to reflect this time in your lives!

Diana Kelly | Year 7 English Teacher



In a field

In a field, whispers sing so sweet
Soft words dance, a gentle treat
Hush and listen, they softly say,
In the night or light of day.

Basketball poem

I love playing basketball,
It's the greatest playing sport of all,
It's the best feeling being on court,
I prefer it over any other sport.
I like bouncing the ball low,
That's when I know I'm in the flow,
I run across the court in the gym
And pretend I'm Kyrie Irving.



Ready for school

Tick tick.
That's the sound of the clock.
Tock tick.
Got to get there quick.
Tick tick.
It's already 8 o'clock!
Tock tick.
Should I call in sick?
Tick tick.
Only one more block.
Tock tick.
Now I got mathematics.



**Slam Poem
Laos' Girl**

The way people ask what I am,
say, "Asian, from Laos and
Vietnam."
Confused faces stare back at me,
"Where's Laos? I cannot see."
A grunt and a groan.
Why can't they find my dad's
home?
Laotian, Laos, ring a bell?
By looking at their faces, I can tell,
"No. What? What is that?"
Crying in my hands as I sat.

Next to Vietnam, next to Thailand,
Why can't they ever find my
land?
So, to all Laotians, all from Laos,
It is going to be a while 'til they
can pronounce,
I feel your pain and stress,
You don't need to change your
culture to impress.
You're beautiful, just the way you
are,
Even though the trauma, might
leave a scar.
All Laotians, all from Laos,
Be proud, that you're from Laos.

Interviewing Returning Students

Balwyn High School former student and SRC President, Stella Reid, returned to our school to be interviewed by current Year 12 student and House Captain Nina Angelkovik. Nina interviewed Stella about her post high school studies and her stellar career in the Australian Football League (AFL), playing for the Richmond Tigers. It was exciting to hear Stella talk about her accomplishments and journey from Balwyn classrooms to the AFL fields. Stella has inspired many, and her return to her high school was a testament to the enduring connection she maintained with her roots here.



Nina, a Richmond supporter herself, posed thoughtful questions about Stella's time at the school, her experiences pursuing a professional sporting career, and the challenges she has faced along the way. Stella's responses provided valuable insights into resilience, discipline, and the importance of pursuing one's passions.



Stella reminisced about her formative years, crediting the school environment for instilling in her the values of teamwork, dedication, and perseverance. She shared anecdotes of her early involvement in sports at the school, highlighting the role that staff and student mentors played in shaping her aspirations. Stella also spoke about intense training regimens with her club, the thrill of game day, and the sense of camaraderie within the Richmond women's team.

The interview will feature as part of an English Language VCE resource, so students across Victoria can read about Stella's exciting story.

Louise Noonan | English and VCE English Language Teacher

Amy Wood | Director of English and Literacy



Rosie Hilder
Director of Student
Leadership/Voice



**Charlie Balias &
Margaret Obolenski**
School Captains

**Zachary Miritis &
Tania Batova**
School Vice Captains

**Fearghas Bennett &
Emma Ho**
SRC Presidents

Learning To Be

It was my honour to announce the 2024 Year 12 Student Leadership Profile at Presentation Night on Tuesday 5 December, including the Executive Student Leadership Team (School Captains, School Vice-Captains and Student Representative Council Presidents), all portfolio Captains including House Captains, and the Middle School Captains. All other positions including Year Level Captains, Student Representative Council, House Captains and various other roles have all now been announced and I wish to congratulate all students who are taking up a leadership role next year. The passion and enthusiasm demonstrated of all students applying for roles has been absolutely outstanding and I am very excited to have the opportunity to work with such a wonderful group of student leaders in 2024.

Year 8 Captains

Anja Bretmaisser and Cassidy Browne

Year 8 Student Representative Council

Stuart Joshi, Carter Pearce, Meera Iyer, Saina Gulati, Ava Plant, Brian Tam, Alexa Maniphonh

Year 8 Churchill House Captains

Deqi Wang and Daniel Orangi

Year 8 Edinburgh House Captains

Alfred Han and Krisha Sajeesh

Year 8 Strathmore House Captains

Harper Thompson-Smith and Loksaraj Karthik

Year 8 Windsor House Captains

Davina Jayamaha and Sitara Devadason

Middle School Captains

Elise Ferguson-Roberts and Simonette Wijewardane

Year 9 Student Representative Council

Hannah Roscoe (Executive Member), Vindy Asuramuni (Executive Member), Davina Jang, Saad Al-Quatatsheh, Harmony Le, Kateryna Zikou, Mia Chia, Matthew Tham

Year 9 Churchill House Captains

Elsie Bang and Ethan Sim

Year 9 Edinburgh House Captains

Sarah Roberts and Tracy Chen

Year 9 Strathmore House Captains

Salina Ly and Ojas Dogra

Year 9 Windsor House Captains

Harry Maddocks and Amaia Mercer

Year 10 Captains

Chloe Pearce and Mohammad Hosseinkhan Qandehari

Year 10 Student Representative Council

Bruce Huang, Nethush Vithanage, Lucia Chan, Brigitte Tan, James Kim, Swastik Das, Felix Tan, Aditya Gariyali

Churchill House Captains

Terence Tang and Elizabeth Tang

Edinburgh House Captains

Alexander Markotis and Andrea Han

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND VOICE Cont.

Strathmore House Captains

Bernice Tam and Daniel Papadopoulos

Windsor House Captains

Jamie Nitsiopoulos

Year 11 Captains

Nethmi Sumanasekera and Yong Hao Chan

Year 11 Student Representative Council

Jayden Oh, Marianna Freesz, Minh Vu, Athena Xu, Janelle Chan, Anjali Prakash, Gilbert O'Shaughnessy, Fergus Yim

Senior School Council Co-Chairs

Asha White and Christina Koutsoufritis

Churchill House Captains

Eugene Kim and Kaleisha Yu

Edinburgh House Captains

Aaron Oommen and Yuka Tog

Strathmore House Captains

Purney Bansal and Ava Philpin

Windsor House Captains

Patrick Li and Chloe Yiu

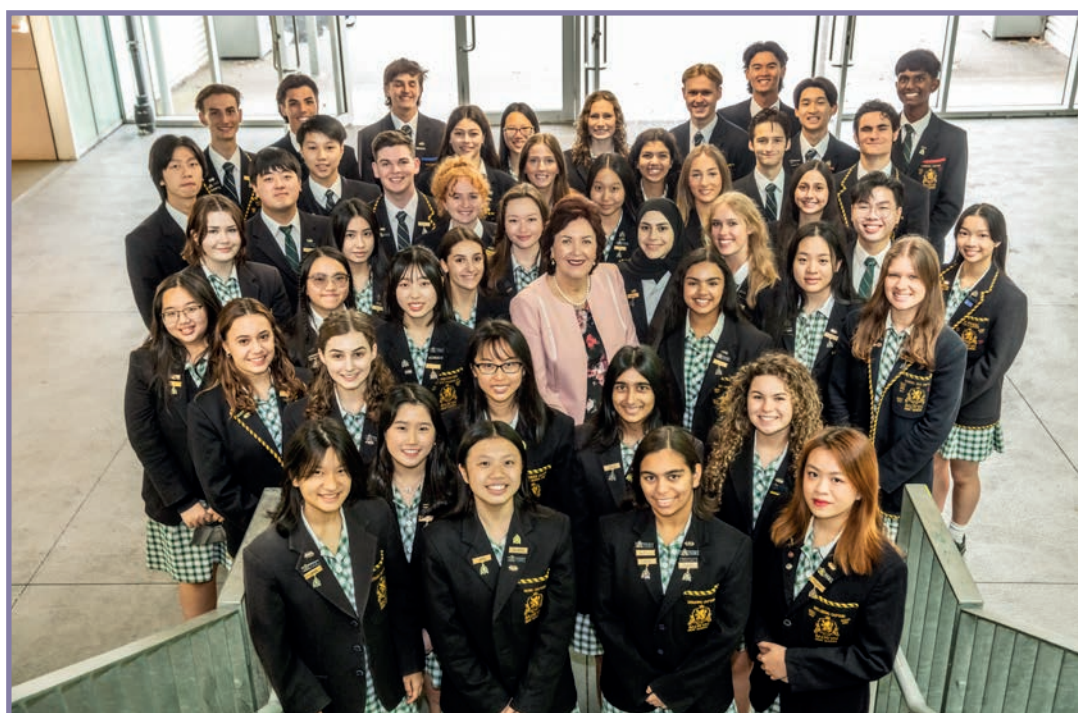
STEP Captains

Rafael Hutagalung and Elisa Chong

Chess Captains

Sean Hawkins and Zheng Xi Lam

Rosie Hilder | Director of Student Leadership and Voice





Tammy Li
Head of Chinese



Melinda Facey
Head of French

Learning To Be

Chinese Re-cap 2023

During 2023, a lot is happening in the Year 7–12 classes, including Chinese First Language, Chinese Background Language, and Chinese Second Language. Here are some reflections done by students.

Chinese Silent Reading at the start of each lesson:

'I was able to spend some time to read different genres of Chinese language books and explore a range of writing styles of the language. It also gave me the opportunity to be exposed to books of other language and consolidate my comprehensive understanding of Chinese language and literature.'

Melinda Teoh | Year 10

Chinese Chess Club:

'Not only does the game help students to develop important skills such as strategy, visualisation, and critical thinking, it is a great way to socialise and make new friends! The club is also a valuable resource for students learning Chinese.'

Levi Liauw | Year 11

Year 9 and Year 10 Chinese Second Language Chinese Culture Day Excursion:
'As I participated in many activities, I realised that language is deeply intertwined with culture, and by immersing myself in various cultural aspects, I could enhance my understanding of the language itself. My participation in Chinese Cultural Day was more than just a one-day event; it became a source of inspiration that I could integrate into my Chinese language learning journey.'

Georgia Bell | Year 10

2023 CLTAV Chinese Second Language Reading Competition:

'The dedication and hard work put in by all participants to learn a new language was clear and truly inspiring. Although speaking in front of such a large crowd made me feel nervous, listening to everybody read made me feel motivated to continue learning Chinese.'

Hyorin Woo | Year 7



2023 CLTAV Chinese First Language and Background Language Writing and Speaking Competition:

'Through this competition, I deeply realised my own shortcomings, so I also met a lot of outstanding students from other schools.'

Ted Yang | Year 11

'Witnessing the commitment and dedication of the competitors left a lasting impression on me. The competition served as a platform for us to see the creativities of others when writing essays, as well as their presentation styles to better engage the audiences, opening my mind to new perspectives.'

Tiffany Jiang | Year 10

'At the same time I realized that I still had a lot to improve on, and this experience was a valuable opportunity for personal growth and self-discovery.'

Luca Wang | Year 11



There are so many highlights in 2023, not only in the Chinese classes but also beyond. We look forward to another wonderful year in 2024!

Tammy Li | Head of Chinese

LANGUAGES - CHINESE AND FRENCH Cont.

French Re-cap 2023

2023 has been another successful year for students studying French at Balwyn High School.

We offer our congratulations to Douglas Joshi for his Unit 3 and 4 French award and outstanding results overall.

We also congratulate Stephanie Markotis for her excellent result in this year's Berthe Mouche Poetry Competition run by the Alliance Française de Melbourne. The theme of the competition was la vérité meaning truth. Paula Velasco Villamil also excelled in the Education Perfect Languages Competition held in March achieving the top score at Balwyn High School and an award for her efforts.

Another highlight this year was the opportunity to welcome Colombe Chaleat. She arrived from France at the start of June and spent six weeks with Asha White as part of a reciprocal exchange arrangement. Colombe and Asha continue to maintain their friendship and are planning further opportunities for catching up and traveling together.

Throughout the year students were able to enjoy the language by attending French Club where they could practise conversation, hear some authentic French and get some assistance with their classwork. We extend an invitation to all students to participate in the French club next year.

Bonnes vacances à tous et à bientôt.

Melinda Facey | Head of French





Erin Shale
VCE Careers Advisor



Melissa Co
Years 7-10 Careers
Advisor



Margaret Uren
Headstart Co-ordinator

Learning To Be

Why Is It More Difficult To Get Into Some Universities?



As our Year 12 students have just received their ATARs, many students and parents ask questions about which university will deliver a better future for graduates. We all have examples where information about a certain book, film, place or person has been exaggerated, inaccurate or overrated. Sometimes we are pleasantly surprised at how great something is after hearing negative feedback or rumours that were clearly incorrect. The same applies to universities. Never simply believe anything you hear, negative or positive, until you check the validity yourself. And this is why some universities are more difficult to access – inaccurate and sometimes exaggerated perceptions of these universities have been accepted as true.

Students and parents should always visit institutions. I also have feedback from hundreds of ex-students who have studied across all universities.

In essence, some universities are more difficult to gain entry to because of public perception. However, it is very interesting to see that our well-informed students are taking the time to verify what they hear and are choosing courses at all universities across Victoria and Australia.

What courses are becoming more popular?

Courses that are becoming more popular are definitely those which have an inbuilt Industry Placement or work experience. All universities are addressing this and are working very hard to include practical experiences into their courses to attract future students. Swinburne University has been offering extensive work experience in most courses for many years and now offers courses tagged as 'Professional'.

Swinburne courses tagged as 'Professional' are offered in Arts, Engineering, Accounting and Business Information Technology, Business, Business Information Technology, Health Science, Computer Science and Media and Communication. These courses offer a compulsory year of full-time paid employment in some of the most prestigious companies Australia-wide. Students are trained in interview technique and supported as they apply for one, two or more places. They attend formal interviews and must choose the most attractive job offered. As high as 85% of students who complete this year of paid employment are then offered ongoing full-time employment after they complete their last year of study. The year of work is completed in the third year. Students have a guaranteed job waiting for them as they complete their tertiary studies. More information can be gained from course entries on the vtac website.

Because these professional courses are so attractive, students with ATARs as high as 99.95 are choosing to study at Swinburne. Other universities also have wonderful INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS averaging at one or two months duration.

Finally...

Well-informed students are not blindly entering courses at any university. They are completing careful research, seeking credible advice and visiting universities in person to see for themselves and speak to current students and tertiary staff. Thankfully, the days where any university is accepted as being 'the best' no longer exist for well-informed students and parents.

Erin Shale | VCE Careers Counsellor

LIBRARY

Learning To Be



Katrina Dawson
Head of Library



Kelly Nolan
Teacher Librarian

The benefits of reading over the school holiday break

Reading for fun during summer holidays offers numerous benefits for students. Here are several reasons why engaging in recreational reading is advantageous:

- **Maintains and Improves Literacy Skills:** Reading regularly helps students maintain and enhance their literacy skills. It reinforces vocabulary, comprehension, and grammar, which are essential for academic success.
- **Expands Knowledge:** Reading for pleasure exposes students to a wide range of topics, genres, and perspectives. It broadens their understanding of the world and can spark an interest in various subjects they might not encounter in their regular classroom activities.
- **Enhances Critical Thinking:** Fiction and non-fiction books often present complex situations and ideas. Analyzing characters, plotlines, and themes encourages critical thinking skills, fostering a deeper understanding of literature and the world.
- **Reduces Summer Learning Loss:** Known as the "summer slide," students can experience a decline in academic skills during long breaks from school. Reading helps combat this decline, keeping their minds active and preventing the loss of valuable knowledge gained during the school year.
- **Boosts Creativity:** Reading imaginative and creative works stimulates the imagination. This can inspire students to think creatively, fostering their own creativity and originality in writing and other endeavors.
- **Improves Focus and Concentration:** In a world filled with distractions, reading requires sustained focus and concentration. Regular reading can improve a student's ability to concentrate on a task for an extended period.
- **Stress Reduction:** Reading can be a great way to relax and unwind. It provides an escape from daily stressors and offers a healthy alternative to screen time. Engaging with a good book can be a form of self-care.
- **Builds Empathy and Understanding:** Reading fiction, in particular, allows students to step into the shoes of characters from diverse backgrounds and experiences. This can foster empathy and a better understanding of different perspectives, promoting social and emotional intelligence.
- **Encourages Lifelong Learning:** Developing a habit of reading for pleasure during the summer can instill a love for lifelong learning. It teaches students that learning is not confined to the classroom but is a continuous, enjoyable pursuit.



LIBRARY Cont.

In summary, reading for fun over summer holidays is not only an enjoyable pastime but also a valuable investment in a student's intellectual, emotional, and social development. It complements formal education and contributes to the holistic growth of an individual.



Big Summer Read – a statewide reading program

This is a competition running for students through Victorian public libraries (like Boroondara Library Services) to encourage them to read over the summer. Students register and record the books they have read or listened to between 1 December and 31 January and can win prizes as a reward. This is an initiative to avoid the 'summer slide' where it is common that students lose literacy skills when they don't read for an extended period. Read more at [Big Summer Read](#).



LIBRARY Cont.

Access to resources during the school holiday period

BHS library is open online all summer. Students can borrow ebooks and audiobooks, watch a huge range of movies and documentaries on ClickView and read The Age online from the Library SharePoint site (a favourite in Compass for students). This is outlined in the latest issue of Fact and Fiction, the library newsletter on Compass Newsfeed.

Summer holiday activity suggestions

Consider a trip to the [State Library of Victoria](#) in the city during the summer. You see the World of the Book exhibition or Mirror: new views on photography (both free!). It is also projected with Christmas lights at night.

Boroondara libraries are open over the summer to borrow print books and a range of other resources. [Boroondara photo competition](#) opens for entries early next year – start snapping great pics over the summer. The theme is Explore Boroondara.

Students interested in writing should consider a competition that runs each term and is free to enter called [Little Stories, Big Ideas](#). The theme for Term 4 is Magic and entries are due December 22. Watch out for new themes each term of 2024. It is free to enter and there are great prizes on offer.

The library staff wish everyone a happy and safe summer break and encourage plenty of reading for pleasure. Here is a snapshot of what staff at BHS plan to read.

Introducing the 2024 Reading Challenge

The library is facilitating a reading challenge in 2024 to encourage regular reading patterns in the BHS community. For January, the challenge is to explore new authors by reading a 2023 debut title. Read the challenges for each month [HERE](#).

Katrina Dawson | Head of Library

Kelly Nolan | Teacher Librarian



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TRADING HOURS

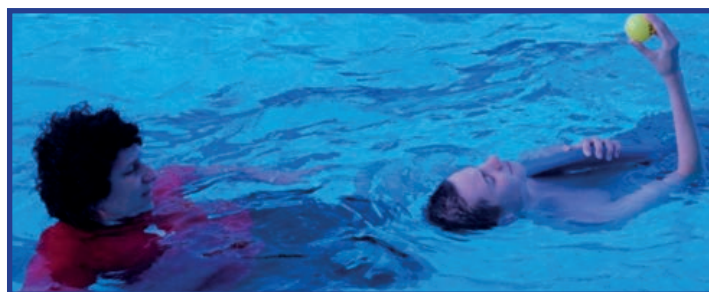
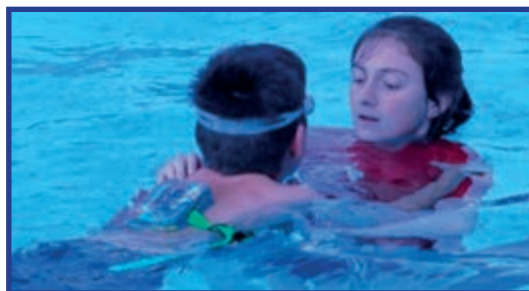
MONDAY	8am - 6pm
TUESDAY	8am - 6pm
WEDNESDAY	8am - 6pm
THURSDAY	8am - 6pm
FRIDAY	8am - 6pm
SATURDAY	8am - 5pm

If you do not require a fitting & know your size, you can order your uniform via the Bob Stewart website. Use our Click 'N' Collect service or have your order posted to home at a \$10.00 flat rate.

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GENERAL NEWS

DUGONGS



We are looking for volunteers to come & work with us at Hawthorn Aquatic & Leisure Centre.

The Dugongs is volunteer program that teaches young people with additional needs, water safety & swimming life skills.

The aim of the sessions is to improve the participants' swimming & water survival skills as well as being as social event for all involved. The program is run solely by volunteers, overseen by 2 Austswim Access & Inclusion trained teacher.

We meet every Tuesday 7-8pm, term time.

We are looking for young people who are interested in making a difference & learning new skills. Guidance & training will be provided.

If you are interested in learning more please contact Wendy Young on 0425 858629, wendpy@icloud.com.

