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Dates to Remember

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Principal's Report

Welcome Back

Welcome to Term 2 and remote learning. These are certainly unprecedented times and we are all learning together. Last week presented many challenges for staff attending the college and staff working remotely. The calls and emails from parents indicated the challenges which you were presented with as families and as parents supporting your children. As Daniel Andrews indicated this is new territory for everyone and some things will work and some things will not work. I appreciate parents filling in our survey about data access and devices. Many of you indicated low bandwidth and we are looking at the way we deliver material to ensure equity for all students.

Please be aware that Compass is our main form of communication and should be checked regularly. As information becomes available I have been sending it through on the Compass newsfeed with the date and an update number. I will continue to do this throughout the term.

Information for parents which is only relevant to one year level will just be sent to parents of that year level. As the requirement is for families to stay at home and that all students that can learn from home MUST learn from home all planned activities for this term such as camps, excursions and work experience have been either cancelled or postponed. Individual information about these events has been sent to families of the specific year level.

As indicated Compass is where students will find the curriculum – the learning intention, success criteria, the Learning Tasks which need to be completed and the dates by which the task is expected to be completed. The tasks set by teachers are designed to ensure students meet the required outcomes in the Senior School and develop the appropriate skills in the Junior School. If your child completes these daily tasks to the best of their ability and completes the work with time to spare that is not a problem, students work at very different speeds but check in with them and ask them if they have uploaded their work. At a later time you might ask what feedback they received and how they can use this feedback.

As this on-line learning is new to all of us we are trialling two forms of electronic communication that allow for real time interaction between the teacher and the students. Two platforms which are approved by the Department as meeting privacy and Child Safe guidelines are Webex (a video conferencing package) and Microsoft Teams (a real time chat program). Initially we are trialling both of these with our Year 12 students and Microsoft Teams with our Integration students to see how they work if there is low bandwidth. We are also attempting to record the video conferences to address access issues and are investigating the most appropriate place to store these for easy student access and limited

downloads. As with any technology we have experienced times when it drops out and so using Compass for lesson plans means that students are able to access this material at any time when it is convenient prior or during the lesson. Should you note issues for your child regarding access it would be appreciated if these were emailed to the college account monbulk.co@education.vic.gov.au . It is required that to use the video of students as part of Webex we need an agreement linked to student privacy completed, students need to be in appropriate attire for school (uniform or free dress but not pyjamas. The device needs to be set up in a location with a neutral background, out of bedrooms and without others or inappropriate material in the background. There should be no identifiable logos or any information that could give away their whereabouts.

Information regarding access and using Webex and Microsoft Teams will be for students in Years 7 to 11 will be sent out in one of the updates which will be posted on the parent and student newsfeeds in Compass. It is important that students locate their Wi-Fi username and password, as these will be used. Staff who use Microsoft Teams are able to provide student usernames and passwords via email.

The department recommends that students in Years 7 to 10 undertake 30 minutes of physical activity every day and it is important that you allow your child to take regular breaks from the computer screen. Whilst a school day is normally 300 minutes of class time with a recess and lunch break it is anticipated that students will be able to complete the work set for them each day in around 200 minutes, undertake 30 minutes of exercise and use the rest of the time to ensure they have breaks from the screen to walk or stretch to ensure they do not strain muscles. Students in Years 11 and 12 also need to ensure that they take appropriate breaks and exercise as this stimulates the chemicals in the body and brain and makes the learning experience stronger.

Student Successes

It seems strange not to have lots of results to put in here but with the requirement to stay at home students have been unable to enter and compete as they would normally have done. However I would like to congratulate all students and families for being able to connect to the remote learning provided by the college. There has been some feedback from families and students that they have been able to follow and complete the tasks on Compass and that parents appreciate the work that has been put into assisting students engage in the learning independently.

Margaret Uren