Keeping In Touch

The next P&C Meeting for 2016 is on Monday February 15th

at 7pm in the LIBRARY in D Block

All Parents and Carers are welcome.

Principal’s Report

Another year is drawing to a close yet staff and students are still working robustly in all classes. Staff are also preparing for next year. PBL: Project Based Learning, BYOD in year 7 and the enrichment classes for year 7 and year 8 to be introduced into the 2016 curriculum have dominated discussions and professional learning days. Resources are being sourced, learning is being shared and programs are being rewritten or upgraded to suit the changes necessary for these future focused ideas. I congratulate all staff in their untiring perseverance in getting this done so that our students will have more engaging and significant ways of learning.

Year 11 Engineering Studies students applied for the University of Wollongong’s STEM competition where they had to submit an assessment task displaying excellence in technology and engineering innovation. Two students, Ava Tollard and Ashleigh Kirkland, have both been successful in gaining a major prize. These girls attended the presentation ceremony at the university and were given a guided tour of the facilities.

Last Saturday a small group of keen gardeners showed up for the first working bee to be held at Kotara High for many years. Groups decided on a project each and managed to spruce up some of the gardens. 40 trees and shrubs were purchased from Trees in Newcastle at a very reasonable cost. Not all plants were put in the ground as the remainder are earmarked for an interest elective group of green thumbs to finish in the last week of school.

I hope everyone will have a Happy Christmas and a safe and relaxing holiday break and I look forward to the return of all students and staff at the end of January.
C Dibben      Acting Principal

Working Bee
Remembrance Day service Gregson Park November 11 2015.

I had the privilege to accompany our school leaders and Theo Williams from year 10, to Gregson Park for this year’s Remembrance Day service organised by the Merewether-Hamilton RSL Sub branch.

Organisers from the sub-branch indicated that it was the first time that a Remembrance Day service had been held at Gregson Park. Kotara High School was proud to be part of the service alongside local public and high schools and members of the community who took time to stop from their busy schedules to take time to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in war.

Theo Williams sang the national anthem at the service and had a personal connection to the occasion. His great grandfather’s name is listed on the war memorial in the park. Once the organisers were aware of Theo’s story, when NBN arrived to film the service, they interviewed him about his family connection to the service.

Congratulations to the students who ran and spoke at the service from local primary and high schools. Kotara High School looks forward to being a part of this important service in 2016.
Music News

While many people tend to think schools wind down at the end of the year, here in the Music department we are still pushing on until the final days of the semester.

This term the School Stage Band played in the competition at Bandfest. We have entered it in the last few years and have improved every year. The band began in the beginners competition a few years ago, entered the intermediate category last year and this year the band has expanded to 28 students, providing the fullest sounding and tightest performance yet.

Against very strong competition, the band received a Highly Commended award. It has been fantastic to see the progress these students have displayed throughout the last few competitions as many students have grown together over the years.

Year 12 have finally completed all their exams! After the music class completed their performances in September, they focused on their aural skills and after the exam most students were happy with the final paper. Congratulations to these young adults and we wish them all well in the future.

At the beginning of next year, senior students will be off to Sydney to see the Encore performance at the Sydney Opera House. This event features the best of the HSC students from the year before and over the years we have had several students nominated for the show. The event displays the best of the best and can inspire students to challenge themselves to achieve the best results they are capable of.

Finally this term we had an Elective Concert in week 9, Tuesday night in the MPC (the 1st of December). Now that Year 12 has left we will have lots of performances from fresh faces, all keen to learn from the live experience and show off their talent.

In week 10 we have the final Presentation Day, featuring the School Stage band and selected performance. This final assembly is open to the public and look for the music provided to be among the best performances of the year.

Overall it’s the end of another busy year in Music and hopefully we will see you at one or many of our upcoming events!

Good luck and Merry Christmas. Chris Danvers
Bandfest
During Term 3, August 7th, 127 Kotara High students from Years 7 to 11 participated in the Australian Mathematics Competition (AMC). This competition is an activity of the Australian Mathematics Trust, sponsored by the Commonwealth Bank, with an emphasis on problem solving – a valuable life skill. This year Kotara High School students earned 4 Distinction Awards, 39 Credit Awards, 68 Prudence awards and 16 awards for participation, an excellent improvement on last year.

Students who sat the competition receive a certificate and a detailed report of their results. Our Stage 5.1 students also participated in the Stage 5.1 Mathematics Competition. Congratulations to Rhianon Holmes who received a money prize for coming third overall in the competition. Kotara High School, in particular the Mathematics Faculty, would like to congratulate everyone who entered the competition. Well done.

FROM THE MATHEMATICS FACULTY:

Students with textbooks at home need to return them to their Maths teacher or the Mathematics Faculty ASAP.
Miss Philpott and the NSW PS Millennium Marching Band

This year one of Kotara High School’s Mathematics teachers, Miss Philpott, has represented our school and Public Education through her involvement with the NSW Public Schools Millennium Marching Band. As the Colourguard Instructor, Miss Philpott works with her section and the band to prepare them for performances such as Sydney’s ANZAC Day parade, The Arts Unit’s Operation Art Exhibition, Arts Alive at the Sydney Opera House, NRL Games and most recently Schools Spectacular which will be broadcast on Channel 9 next week.

During the September school holidays Miss Philpott and the Millennium Marching Band travelled to the USA for a two week tour. In San Francisco they visited Golden Gate Bridge, cruised around Alcatraz, rode stretch hummers to Treasure Island, watched the seals while exploring Pier 39, visited the Monterrey Bay Aquarium and performed the pre-game show at a San Francisco Giants baseball game. From there they flew up to Seattle, home of the University of Washington and the Husky Marching Band. They had the unique experience of workshopping with one of the top university marching bands and performing with them in a combined show at the NFL game between the University of Washington and the University of California in front of a crowd of more than 80,000 people. While in Seattle students also visited two high schools, sat in on a Pre-Calculus class, pop quizzes, band and choir rehearsals and performed at the school assembly and Friday night football game. At this performance the band played in the stands throughout the game and performed drill during the half time show.

Seattle also provided some amazing sightseeing opportunities at iconic places such as the Seattle Space Needle, the Experience Music Project, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Pike Place home of the original Starbucks. The last leg of the trip was down to LA where students paraded through Knotts Berry Farm and Disneyland where they also participated in a Disney soundtrack workshop. After all the performances, students spent their days riding rollercoasters and theme rides at the parks as well as visiting the Chinese Theatre, Hard Rock Café and Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum in Hollywood.

The NSW PS Millennium Marching Band is a group of passionate students full of energy, excitement and commitment. They perform a mix of popular, traditional and new music - but they don’t just stand around. While playing their instruments, students march to create intricate patterns and images giving audiences a visual experience along with the amazing sound. The colourguard simultaneously coordinate flag and movement routines. This great opportunity is open for every student at Kotara High School. To experience the thrill of performing to large audiences in a unique way then contact Miss Philpott for more information. Membership is open to all students in years 7-12 at public schools in NSW. The band rehearse one weekend a month in Sydney. There is a place in the band for anyone with energy, commitment and a willingness to try something new.

For more information on the band visit Miss Philpott in the Mathematics Staffroom, visit the NSW PS Millennium Marching Band on facebook or other social media with #nswmmb or @nswmmb or apply online at the Arts Unit website.
White Ribbon Breakfast

The last week of November saw the school participate in a White Ribbon breakfast and the Walk a Mile Koori Style march. Both of these events were designed to raise awareness of the devastating impact of domestic violence. The heartbreaking truth is that on average, a woman is killed every five days in this country by a violent partner. That amounts to 78 so far this year.

White Ribbon Day was created to highlight this problem in our society, to raise voices in protest, to stand in solidarity against violence and to shine a light in hope that the vulnerable may step out of the darkness.

The White Ribbon Breakfast was attended by community organisations, charitable businesses, community leaders and delegates from many schools in our region. Our representatives, Kotara High’s Captains and Vice Captains had the privilege to listen to survivors of domestic violence and family members of those who were unable to escape. The highly emotional event left a significant impression on our school leaders along with a desire to do more to help those in need.

Ben Turner
The Walk a Mile Koori Style march followed two days later and was attended by forty-five students from Kotara High. This boy’s only event proved to be a great success. It educated our students on this very serious issue, celebrated their participation, enlisted their support for the cause and allowed them to stand tall in defiance of violence in our society.

The march from King Street to King Edward Park featured hundreds of students from many local schools. The students spent the day playing sport, listening to music and guest speakers; watching indigenous dancers and enjoying a barbeque. It was a great day for all. Well, almost all. The school would like to send a sincere shout-out to David Matthews, a true moral trooper who suffered a broken collarbone whilst playing touch football in the park. He bore his injury like an absolute legend, resolute and proud in the face of great pain. David, you’re a champion.
SRC 2015 Review

During 2015 the SCR have been working hard to raise money for various foundations, and Kotara High School itself. The members have all been proactive in developing ideas, organising events and listening to what the students at Kotara High School want. The fundraising initiatives of 2015 were as follows:

- On Valentine’s Day we raised $192.35 for KHS from rose deliveries.
- During March we raised $807.30 for the Leukaemia Foundation by conducting the “World’s Greatest Shave”.
- The Big Day Out in May was an epic half-day event with local talent and numerous stalls. The day raised an amazing $3958.50 for KHS and contributed to the building of the sheltered footpath leading to the bus terminal.
- During June we raised $765.00 for the Signing Choir.
- $444.80 was raised for Jeans for Genes Day during August.
- We finally had our first “Big Night In” which raised $650.70 for KHS, also during August.
- The SRC supported Beyond Blue also in August, raising $670.50 to donate to the foundation.
- Currently we are selling “Candygrams” to spread some Christmas Cheer to raise money for KHS.

Overall, it has been a very successful year for the SRC, with members motivated to raise even more funds in 2016.

KHS 2015 SRC
E-books

The library e-book system is operational. We have started with a small selection of e-books for students to enjoy anywhere, anytime. It is easy to access once you have downloaded the wheelers e-platform app from your device provider's app store (Apple, Google Play, Android, etc.).

Steps for accessing e-books:

- Find your library
- Type in: *Kotara High School*
- Sign in using your username (e.g. janet.smith) and the password: *kotara1* (note every student has the same password)

- That’s it!! 😊

Students have access to these resources for 2 weeks at which point the e-book will automatically be removed from your device and returned to the Kotara High library.
Attention all Parents and Carers,

We are always in urgent need of volunteers if you can spare a few hours a day that would be greatly appreciated.

Please ring 49433044 or 0412557016

The canteen has EFTPOS available. A minimum of $3.00 needs to be spent.

Katherine Owens
Canteen Manager
ATTENTION ALL STAFF, PARENTS AND CARERS;

There is a drop off and pick up area, for our disabled students **ONLY** in the Staff car park off Corriston Cres. Please take care and use caution when driving through our car park to drop your child off **OUTSIDE** the school gate.

There is a **15km** speed limit, for the safety of staff and students in that area.
Connection Problems?

Walking on eggshells?

Not sure what to say to your child to help them to make the best decisions for themselves?

Often as a parent, your unconditional love and care for your child's wellbeing can leave you feeling alone, stressed, living on the edge, reacting powerlessly to people and events around you.

Learning a few simple tools can help you reconnect with your son or daughter and completely turn things around for both of you.

Imagine coming home to a big hug from your child, discussing the day's events and hearing the excitement in your child's voice, seeing them living a life of purpose.

Imagine laughter and smiles because everyone in your household is on an energy high.

It is possible, very possible.

Have the Courage to Connect and to Create a different story.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkGHihQL-uI

Contact Michelle Lee

Transformational Youth Passion Coach

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- Tamworth • Taree • Toronto • Wallsend • Windale
THE ATHLETE’S FOOT

Kotara High School has agreed on a joint venture with The Athlete’s Foot in supplying footwear for our students.

This company has all the details in regard to the appropriate footwear required for school shoes, sport shoes and shoes needed in a workshop, kitchen and science lab.

The school receives $5.00 from every pair of shoes purchased by you at The Athlete’s Foot which we will use to enhance your child’s curriculum.

This offer is for any member or friend of the family who purchase shoes for any reason, simply mention the school’s name.

See attached flyer for more information or please don’t hesitate to contact the school.

Please note: Parents are under no obligation to purchase shoes from The Athlete’s Foot, however,

it is important that your shoe purchase complies with our School’s Uniform Policy and Work Health Safety requirements.
Summer fun in nature around Port Stephens

Join our Discovery Rangers to experience a different side to Port Stephens and Tomaree National Park this summer holiday. There’s something for everyone.

**Tomaree’s WilderQuest treasure trail**
Thursday 7 January 2016, 9am–11.30am
Discover the sights, sounds and heritage of Tomaree as you step back to the time of World War II.

**WilderQuest wild world of rockpools**
Friday 8 January 2016, 1.30pm–3.30pm
Explore amazing rockpool creatures on Boat Harbour’s headland.

**Spooky night walk**
Wednesday 13 January 2016, 6.30pm–8.30pm
Experience stories by dusk, the haunting ambience ‘behind the scenes’ of Tomaree’s World War II gun emplacements, and then return by dark.

**WilderQuest bush to beach family discovery**
Thursday 14 January 2016, 3pm–5pm
Enjoy nature with fantastic family activities. For the young and young at heart.

**Bookings and information**
Bookings for all NPWS Discovery Tours are essential. Book online following the links above, or phone 13000 PARKS (13000 72757). All tours between $12 and $15 per person and families between $36 and $45.
For more information on tours, such as meeting points, please follow the web links or ask on booking. For general enquiries, phone Sue Olsson on (02) 4984 8210 (after 7 December 2015), or email [suzanne.olsson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:suzanne.olsson@environment.nsw.gov.au)
The University Newcastle’s Homestay Program needs your help!

The Homestay program believes that each person can make a positive difference in the life of another.

The Homestay program is seeking local families to host an International student in their home on a short term basis or long term basis. If you are able to provide a friendly home-environment for an International student, then we'd like you to please apply for the Program.

Families and students are matched and information is provided prior to placements.

If you are interested in joining the Homestay Program please contact the Coordinator on:

Office: 49216777 or 0400411616

Email: homestay@newcastle.edu.au

Fees paid to Host families for 2016 are:

- $245.00 for room plus 21 meals per week
- $230.00 for room plus 16 meals per week

(Students’ buy lunch Mon- Fri)

Internet access is $10.00 per week.
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admin@breakthroughtraining.net.au

(c) 2015 Breakthrough Training
DATES TO REMEMBER

DECEMBER

Monday 7th –
Friday 11th

HSC Assessment Task

Wed 9th

Presentation Day

Thursday 10th-
Wednesday 16th

End of Year Activities

Wednesday 16th

Last Day for Students

JANUARY

Wednesday 27th

Teachers only Return to School

Thursday 28th

Years 7,11 and 12 only Return to School

Friday 29th

Years 8, 9 and 10 Return to School

FEBRUARY

Tuesday 2nd

School Swimming Carnival

Monday 15th

P&C Meeting 7pm Library
D Block