Dear Parent and Caregivers

Students are currently sitting half yearly exams and the half yearly reporting cycle has kicked off. Can I emphasise to the learning community the need to prepare for these exams and for students to be making their best efforts toward attending and completing them. Half Yearly reports will be issued by the end of the term and we are looking at doing something a little different with the Half Yearly Parent/Teacher night. It will be moved to the first week of term three and we will be having a BBQ along with the interviews. The Executive have nominated that I should get on the tools with the SRC and cook the BBQ. The proposed date is the 16th July which will be the first Thursday back next term so please put that in your diary.

After a couple of unsuccessful attempts last term the P&C met on Wednesday night and there were enough people in attendance to form a quorum and conduct the Annual General Meeting. Can I thank and congratulate our new President, Chris Pease, who has put in a lot of time supporting the P&C both at the high school and the public school. I’d also like to acknowledge and thank outgoing President, Kath Day McGuirk, who held the position for three years during a turbulent time at Gunnedah High with a number of Principals coming and going. Kath will still be involved in the canteen committee. Thank you very much for your ongoing support.

It seems Gunnedah High is going through an era of staffing turn over. This happens in schools at times. The TAS Head Teacher, Luke Verdon, has moved on to a Vocational Education position based in Port Macquarie. He finished Friday 22nd May. I wish him well in his new position with the new challenges it will bring. We will still have Mrs. Verdon with us for the remainder of the term. Terry Lewis, who has been a Head Teacher above our allocated staffing entitlement, will move into the position of TAS Head Teacher.
Karen Cull, a very long serving member of the Gunnedah High Science staff and Gunnedah Community, has been successful in gaining the position of Science Head Teacher. Congratulations Karen, you have served the school and community for many years, much deserved.

With Lyn Thomas out of the school working in a Departmental position for Terms Two and Three, and quite possibly Term Four, Graham Jones the PE Head Teacher, will relieve as Deputy Principal responsible for Years 8, 10, 12.

I understand there has been some talk in the community about the decision to cut a class from Year 7. If I can explain that decision. Schools are staffed by the number of students attending the school. The more students, the more teachers and more classes. The reverse applies of course - fewer students means fewer teachers and classes. Each year the school has to put in its estimated enrolment for the following year and then in week 3 of the next year put in the actual student numbers that have attended. We put in 470 students and ended up with 450 students. Both South School and the Public School also came in lower than they expected as, some families with school age children left town over the summer holidays. As a result we had to cut a class from one of the year groups. This decision was not made easily or lightly and was debated heavily by the school’s executive. The maximum class size for junior classes in core subjects is 30 and in big schools like Oxley High many of the junior classes would run at 28, 29, 30. To give Year 7 the best possible start we had set up very small classes of only around 17. So after much debate the cut was made in Year 7. The Year 7 classes are now at 24 or 25, still well short of the maximum of 30. An unfortunate situation but the cut had to occur somewhere. We are aware it has changed the dynamic of some groups and are working with the Year Adviser and Learning Support Team to cater for these changes.

Mrs. Cull has been working hard on supporting families and getting students into uniform. I have said before that this is a big focus for us this year. We have established a small but growing clothing pool and any donations are most welcome. We are offering student’s jumpers who don’t have them. We have put extra money into student assistance to try and cater for families and we are allowing black jumpers to be worn until the newly designed rugby style jumpers arrive in a few weeks. So we are doing everything we can to work with families to see the Gunnedah High uniform is worn and supported. This is a clear message from our two major parent bodies of the P&C and AECG. For students who will not work with us Mrs. Cull has started to place students on orange cards and contact home. For students who will still not work with us it will be regarded as persistent disobedience under the school and DEC discipline code. My clear message, multi coloured hoodies are not acceptable, get on board and get into the Gunnedah High uniform.

Finally, finishing on a high note. A big congratulations to the Horse Sports Team who competed at the Curlewis Horse Sports Event. We were the champion school for the day and had three individual champions - an outstanding result! Also, thank you to staff member, Joanne Garland, for organising and supervising the team. Schools are under increasing pressure not to participate in horse sports so thank you for taking considerable time and effort to organise our team.

Shane Kelly, Principal.

GHS - CHAMPION SCHOOL

Congratulations to the Horse Sports Team:
Jessica Moore, Jemma Wilkinson-Ryan
Callum Letts, Tara Wilkinson-Ryan
Tom Wilson, Haylee Murrell
Lucy Merlehan, Danica Johnston
**GABBY O’GORMAN**

Year 11 student, Gabby O’Gorman, travelled to the Domain Tennis Centre, in Hobart, on the 2nd – 10th May to compete at the Australian All Schools Championships. The NSW team successfully defended the Jack Pizzy Cup for the seventh straight year, defeating Victoria in the final. Gabby was selected in the Australian Merit side after her outstanding performances for the NSW team. Congratulations Gabby, fantastic effort!

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**CHANGING YOUTH CHOICES**

Students in the 7/8 POP class are participating in a 20 week program at the PCYC called Programs Changing Youth Choices. The program is based on the three focus areas of Gunnedah High School being Respect, Responsibility and Doing Your Best and collaborates with local community agencies and organisations to help students achieve these goals.

Students will be working alongside Harry Cutmore (Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Oxley LAC), Snr Constable Trevor Roberts (Youth Case worker at PCYC) and Danielle Arnall (Reconnect, Gunnedah) as well as other local guest presenters.

The PCYC program explores relationship issues such as peer pressure, bullying, and dealing with emotions, social responsibility, team-work, fitness and identity. The program supports the students to identify and feel a connection to the local community, school and peers. The PCYC program allows students to develop a sense of belonging and assists in promoting positive relationships within the school and wider community.

Students have the opportunity to cook lunch for everyone in the program. This opportunity has been made possible by Woolworths, Gunnedah, who kindly donate groceries each week.

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**PCYC YOUTH SPACE**

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**Gunnedah PCYC**

**Every Thursday**

**Age: High School**

**Time: 3.30 – 5.30**

Last Thursday, students cooked chicken and bacon carbonara for lunch. Harry Cutmore, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, is pictured assisting the students in cooking.
ART CENTRE- ANZAC EXHIBITION

Students from the IM support class, and the Year 7 and Year 8 Pop class, were fortunate to attend the Gunnedah Art Centre’s exhibition honouring the ANZACS.

The exhibition included artifacts such as a dead man’s penny, a program from the first organised ANZAC day ceremony and a pocket book with a bullet lodged inside it, symbolising the harsh reality of war for the students.

The group viewed two short documentaries created by school students on local men who became soldiers in WW1.

The group finished by pinning a hand knitted poppy to the memorial poster hanging in the exhibition. The group was touched by the exhibition and felt very honoured to be invited to view the amazing artifacts on display.

Sitting down to a lovely morning tea provided by the Art Centre, Gunnedah High School student, Jtaya Davis, thanked their host, Natalie, and the volunteers at the Art Centre. The students then said their goodbyes and headed back to school discussing what they had seen and hoping it would be on display next year to show their families.

Katie Bulley and Emma Christie

POP CLASS WORKING OUT AT PCYC

CHESS

CHESS COMPETITION
LIBRARY
FRIDAYS RECESS AND LUNCH
Was I ever like that?

A support and education session for parents, carers, teachers and friends of young people who may be having a tough time. Find out how to help your young person and yourself through life’s challenges and meet others who may be feeling the same way as you!

TUESDAY 23rd JUNE

Gunnedah Services Club 6pm till 9pm (FREE finger food)

Topics Include:

Sexual Health and Healthy Relationships, Drug and Alcohol Use, Young People and the Law / Cyber Safety, Depression & Anxiety, Self-Harm & Suicide.
NORTH WEST TENNIS

Congratulations to the Gunnedah High School Girls Tennis Team: Gabby O’Gorman, Kyra Carlyon, Maddison Hagan, Jessica Moore and Casey Egan on defeating Coonabarabran High School 8-0. The girls will now progress to semi finals to be played in Tamworth.

YEAR 11 BIOLOGY

Year 11 Biology students dissected and measured the length of a sheep’s small intestine as part of their unit of study of the Mammalian Digestive System. When laid out, the two small intestines measured an average of 20 metres.
Links to Learning is part of the TAFE Work/Links program. Gunnedah High School’s Year 9 and 10 students are participating in the Rural Fire Service, Cadet Training Course. Each week the students have hands on training with the volunteers of the Rural Fire Service Brigade and are currently learning about hose and fire nozzle usage. Students will be able to join the Rural Fire Service once they have completed their training at the end of the term.
This year the Gunnedah High School Athletic Carnival will be held on the school oval. Year 12 and Year 11 Construction Classes have been leveling and laying formwork for the long jump pit, in readiness for the carnival.

GUNNEDAH EISTEDDFOD

Gunnedah High students took part in the local Gunnedah Eisteddfod last week, swapping their school clothes for dance costumes and their pens for props.

The students performed extremely well despite nerves getting to them and received a second place in musical entertainment. They enjoyed watching their peers from other local schools perform and look forward to performing again in the regional CAPERS later in the year. Well done girls! Mrs. Katie Bulley.

GOODBYE MR VERDON

TAS Head Teacher, Mr. Luke Verdon, has taken up the position of Vocational Education Officer based in Port Macquarie. Mr. Verdon finished at Gunnedah High on Friday May 22nd. The Principal, staff and students wish you well in your new position.