

Manager's Report

With Ms Freeburn on leave for 6 weeks it is my absolute pleasure to sit at the helm of this incredible organisation for that short period. Mrs Virginia Cluff is very ably filling my normal role and you will see her report further on.

Spring is a time of new growth and fresh starts with the promise of a long, hot summer in which to grow. I speak of our new Year 7 students for 2014 who will join us on November 16th for their orientation day. Having completed this orientation every year since 2009, we nearly have the mix right, however in true xsel fashion, we look for improvements each time.

At residential school we will welcome our new students in Years 8 and above and celebrate the xsel journey of our Year 10's who will move to senior school.

One of the great joys of the orientation of new students is the manner in which they are welcomed

into xsel by existing students. I put out a call for volunteer student mentors last week and quickly had all available positions filled. The generosity of xsel students is wonderful.

How does one mentor a student who is possibly several hundred kilometres away? The same way we interact on a daily basis with communication via email and the Meet and Greet forum on Moodle. Our students quickly become digital natives if they aren't already when they arrive. On that note a bouquet to our colleagues in primary schools across the region who prepare students in the use of technology in high school. Over the years we have seen fabulous growth in the technology skills already held by students when they arrive in Year 7.

I trust you will enjoy reading of the exploits and adventures of some of our students further on in the newsletter.

Barbara Bannister

Brain Training

It has been fascinating to watch Todd Sampson on ABC television on Thursday nights as he investigates the capacity to redesign the brain. His exposition on creativity and innovation last week was mesmerizing and exciting as he showed many of the techniques we also use in xsel to encourage students to think outside the box. If you have access to iView and missed the show, I thoroughly recommend watching it. <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/redesign-my-brain-with-todd-sampson/#episode/DO1125H001S00>

Year 7 Entry to Selective Schools 2015 Now Open

Applications are now open for current Year 5 students to apply to sit the placement test in 2014 for entry into a selective school in Year 7 2015.

Parents and carers are encouraged to seek further information on the Selective Schools website at the following link and to discuss this application with their local principal.

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/k-6assessments/shsplacement/index.php>

In addition to the application form above, students wishing to enter the virtual selective provision need to print out the form on this link, complete details and hand to the local principal for completion.

http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/k-6assessments/shsplacement/ss_virtual.php

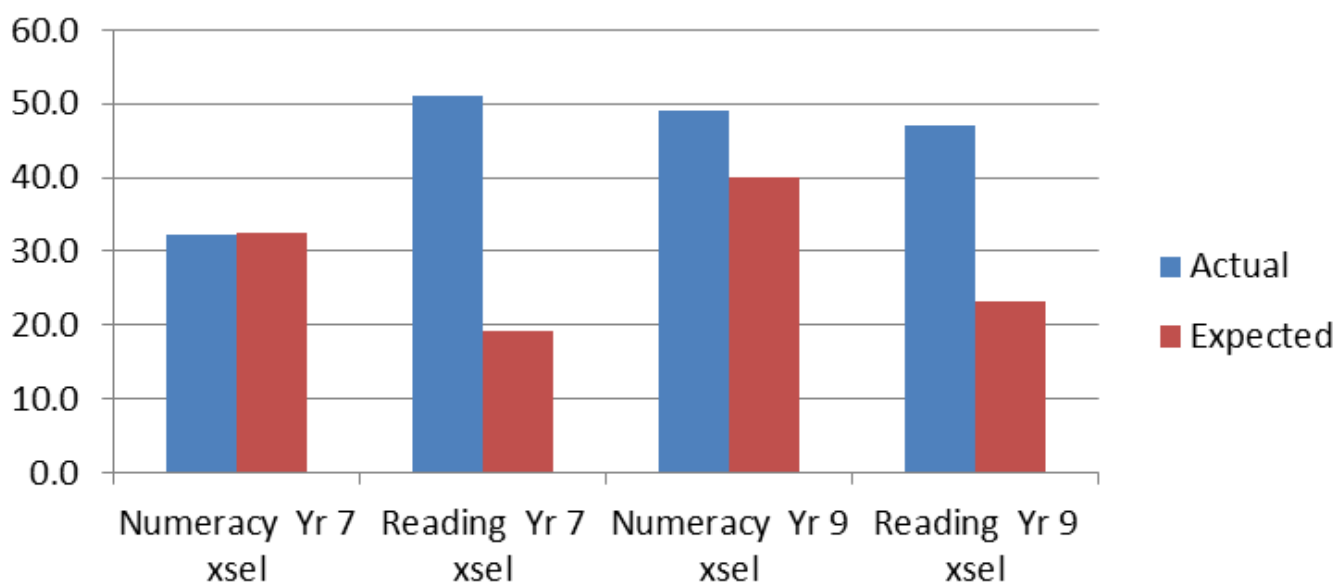
NAPLAN 2013

NAPLAN data will have arrived home recently. xsel does not receive a full NAPLAN report for our shared students as the data belongs to the local school, nonetheless we are given some small information. Traditionally Year 7 growth is attributed to the dedication and hard work of the primary school teachers as the students have only been in high school for a matter of weeks before NAPLAN tests. Year 9 scores however have a significant contribution from xsel in addition to that of the local school. Remembering that literacy and numeracy are the responsibility of all subject areas, we share in each student's progress with staff at the local school in Years 7, 8 and 9. It is also critical to

remember that NAPLAN is a diagnostic test aimed at improving teaching and learning. It is not a measure in itself although one would be forgiven for thinking it is, given the press it receives sometimes. xsel uses the data to guide future teaching and learning based on the evidence of the success of past teaching and learning.

Interpreting NAPLAN data is a complex process. Something to keep in mind is the expected growth of students becomes less, the higher their starting score in either Yr 5 or Yr 7. Many xsel students start from a very high base and have little "room to grow" as it were. The graph below is still quite worthy of Paul Keating's famous quote as being "a beautiful set of numbers".

Average xsel Student Growth NAPLAN 2013



Cyber Safety

Whilst enjoying the thought of collaboration online for various things, parents, carers, support staff and students are reminded that **at no time will xsel teachers ever suggest using unregulated social media** forums to complete school work. xsel provides a number of collaborative tools that are in a regulated (read cyber SAFE) environment including forums on Moodle, chat on Moodle, and Edmodo forums. In addition, from time to time, teachers arrange access to their Adobe Connect room after school hours for students to collaborate

on tasks. There is then the ubiquitous email trail that we use on a several times daily basis.



Teaching, Learning and Technology

Hello everyone, I am back in the very large shoes of Mrs Barbara Bannister as the Teaching, Learning Technology Officer for xsel, while Ms Freeburn is away. My learning curve is a fast and furious one with many challenges being thrown my way. I am enjoying getting to know a wide variety of new members of the xsel community which consists of xsel support people, parents, and office staff, IT staff and others from around our region. I am also revelling in the interaction between our fantastic xsel staff and students from a different perspective. I thank you all for your patience as I figure out just how to accomplish the tasks this role entails.

Examinations

By the time you are reading this I anticipate that the xsel examination week may be over. I hope all our students were able to go above and beyond all expectations with their outstanding displays of academic prowess. With all the study and revision I am sure the results will be well deserved.

Residential School

Week 5 is approaching quite quickly and we are preparing for yet another sensational face to face learning opportunity that residential school provides for us. There is a wide and varied array of activities

planned from a number of KLA's.

Mathematics will be a new and unique experience where vertical integration of classes will see students able to select mathematics activities they are interested in. One of the maths activities involves a very special guest speaker, details will be revealed upon the completion of the examination week.

English year 9 students will be performing a scene from Romeo and Juliet as part of their assessment task. This activity is a group task and is a highlight.

A diverse and eclectic collection of spectacular science experiments are planned by our science teachers. All year groups should anticipate a fun-filled and informative session in the science laboratories of the Dubbo Senior Campus. On this note it is a great privilege to utilise the amazing facilities at the campus to conduct our science lessons and the science KLA would like to thank the helpful and generous assistance of the Head Teacher Science, Mr James Eddy, for his cooperation and support during our xsel residential schools. The science practical activities are always a highlight for the students in xsel and these would not be possible without the support of Mr Eddy and the staff of the Dubbo Senior College.

Virginia Cluff

Sydney University Gifted and Talented Discovery Program

Back in the school holidays I was fortunate enough to take part in the Sydney University Gifted and Talented Discovery Program ("GATS"). GATS was a three day program at the University itself where we spent normal school hours studying chemistry on the Wednesday, biology on Thursday and finishing with physics on Friday.

I was one of 100 students but we were split into groups of roughly 15, and they became your family while you were there.

Going from Broken Hill to Sydney was a massive culture shock, but I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and if anyone is given the opportunity I encourage you to take the time to wander around the campus and see the blend of the classic stone buildings standing beside modern structures.



I recommend the program to any students who are able to take the time and go, it is a great impression of university life and the many science practicals are guaranteed to go off with a bang!

Katie McInnes

Term 4 Residential School

Commences: 6.00pm, Wednesday 6 November
Big4 Parklands, Dubbo

Concludes: 1.30pm, Friday 8 November
Wesley Hall, Dubbo

The activity on Thursday evening will be a student disco. Start practicing your dance moves people!

Classes at the Senior Campus will conclude a little earlier than usual on Friday 8 November to enable interested parents to join us for our assembly which will conclude our final residential school for 2013.

Term 4 Assembly

Parents are warmly invited to join the students and staff of the xsel Virtual Selective High School Provision at our final assembly for 2013:

Friday 8th November, 2013, 11.30am to 1.00pm

at the Wesley House Community Centre, 64-66 Church Street, Dubbo.

It will be a special celebration for our Year 10 students and an opportunity for the whole xsel community to mark their transition into senior schooling. The assembly will conclude with a light lunch at 1pm, before students depart for home or public transport transfers.

World Goju Ryu Karate Championship



My recent time in South Africa was absolutely AMAZING! I had an unforgettable experience and I am proud to say that I received:

- Bronze Medal: Individual Male Kumite U/52kg, 14/15 Years
- Silver Medal: Team Kumite Male, 14/15 Years

I may have received a few injuries along the way, but nether-the-less, I had an awesome time, competing against people from India, Czech Republic and South Africa. There were over 20 countries present and I am happy to report that Australia has walked away with 8 medals in total after the three-day tournament.

Head Shave

Throughout 2013 the Campbell family have held three separate fundraising events on behalf of the

Prostate Cancer Foundation

The main event taking place on Sunday 22 September 2013 being a Lawn Bowls Day, barbeque, auction, raffles and the head shave of four family members.

The Campbell family raised almost \$4,500 on the day, and in total, raised \$7,515.55.

“Both my grandfathers have had Prostate Cancer. One has had the disease for over 10 years and suffers from the side effects of treatment, whereas my other grandfather passed away almost two years ago (at the age of only 69) because of the disease. We are completing the fundraising in his memory, and wish to raise awareness.”

“I would like to thank those who donated, as well as those who showed us support.”

Lachlan Campbell

