

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2008

Undertaking to write a report for the annual school magazine is a task that I enjoy. I have the opportunity to formally reflect and pen some comments on the events and activities at Whitebridge High School for the past year. One of the best parts of my role as principal is the collection of memories and experiences that I have from leading a school as dynamic and robust as Whitebridge.

I hope that this would be the same for all students, parents and staff associated with our school.....collectively we are part of an extended family where we grow and work together and, at the same time, can reminisce about our past together through this years edition of the SPAN.

Well 2008 has been a year of achievements and significant events globally: the Beijing Olympics opening up the nation of China to the eyes of the world; the National Apology to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia by the Federal Government; the world financial crisis and its impacts on our lifestyle in Australia; the finding of water (ice crystals) on Mars and possibly evidence of previous life on that planet; the first year of a change of the Australian Federal government for 12 years; the signing of the Kyoto Convention by the Australian Government; international action on climate change, the election of the first black president of the USA.....these examples indicate to me that while it would appear that our lives are played out locally they are linked to advances, achievements and challenges that are occurring nationally, internationally and inter-planetary as well.

This changes my perspective a little when I think back over 2008 and teaching, learning and associated events that have occurred at school this year. I critically question myself.....are we preparing our students well enough for the future? What will 'their future' be like? How can I assist my teachers to meet the future needs of students in the rapidly changing international world in which they will live?.....and ask questions of our School Council about the direction and achievements of our school.

I am pleased that I have a dynamic School Council who can reflect all the views of the full scope of the diversity of our school. I am very appreciative of their guidance and support for the school.

In what ever we do at our school there are underpinning values that we, as a school community hold. We value our: learning and the right of all people to learn.....not only for academic purposes but for our social development as well; our respect of others and the need to include respect of others belongings and feelings; and our need to accept responsibility for our actions.

We hold these values dearly as our guiding principles for the development of each student. Fortunately our students have a great foundation that places them in good stead for ethical decision making and civic contribution for the future.

Our 2008 year 12 students have made a great contribution to the positive culture of our school over their six years with us. They have set new benchmarks for future year groups in cheerleading at the swimming and athletics carnivals. They have introduced the canteen helpers program for Year 10 students. They have performed consistently above the state average in external testing for the group. We wish them well for the future and know that they will make a great contribution as young Australians. I thank the staff and parents for their support and commitment to this group of students. Special mention is made of Joe O'Neil and Sam Oswald who are undertaking GAP years in India and Argentina respectively as teachers of English as a second language.

Students have been participating in a wide range of activities this year; special days for literacy and numeracy with our feeder schools; participation in regional debates and conferences on climate change and the environment; success at regional, state and national team and individual sporting competition; participation and success in the state and national academic competitions; a wide range of wilderness activities that are designed at building resilience in students; great achievements in fund raising by students and full participation by the school and students in a wide range of community activities.

I thank all staff and parent helpers for their contribution to our school this year. I am proud of the student's achievements and the developments they have made this year.

I encourage all students to extend their view of the world and to engage in learning to their full potential so they too can uphold the reputation and the traditions of our great school.

Together we.....'seek the way of life.'

Ian Wilson
Principal.