

Dear Parents and Carers,

As 2023 comes to an end, it is a busy and exciting time for our school as we reflect and begin to plan for 2024. This year was particularly important in regards to this reflection with our school review that took place in Term 3. All Victorian schools undergo a school review every four years where an expert panel supports the school to celebrate the strengths and work with the leadership team to suggest changes and goals moving forward.

We are now excited to communicate some of these changes with you.

Introduction of a Learning Advocate:

A clear highlight celebrated by the review panel was the mentor program in Years 7-9 and 12. Therefore, the notion of an advocate for all students is being refined into a formal learning advocate role for each student every year. Our learning advocates are responsible for supporting our young people to live up to our new school motto of **'Embrace challenge, achieve excellence'**. This will be done through tracking and supporting each young person's wellbeing, learning, attendance and uniform. The learning advocate will be a first point of contact for students and their carers when seeking support along their educational journey.

Introduction of a formal 10 minute morning check in with the Learning Advocate:

Each morning students will be required to go to a 10 minute session called 'Learning Advocate Time' (LAT) with their learning advocate and other same-age peers. The Learning Advocate will be a caring adult who will welcome students to school each day, ensure they are ready to learn, communicate important daily messages, as well as support and track student learning, attendance and uniform. During this time, students will be guided through the skills required to get ready for their day so that they can 'embrace challenge and achieve excellence.'

Deconstruction of the FUSE program:

The FUSE program has been deconstructed into a core program in year 7, 8 and 9. The practice of having multiple classes and teachers sharing the same learning space will be discontinued. Students will have the same teacher for English and Humanities and the same teacher for Maths and Science. However these four subjects will no longer be 'fused' together.

The core curriculum program will still see a reduction in the number of teachers many secondary school students have thereby continuing to allow for strong and nurturing relationships between students and teachers. This model will mean our teachers will get to know their students academically and personally in order to support them to reach their full potential in the core curriculum areas. Students will undertake a 'SURF' program three sessions a week where they will learn essential skills relevant to our values of Strive, Unite, Respect and Flourish. In this subject they will focus on proactive wellbeing strategies, pathways and careers, essential reading skills and goal setting.

Introduction of a formal homework program in Year 7-10:

To continue to support student's literacy and numeracy a formal homework program will be introduced for all students in Year 7-10. This is to support students in the skills of managing homework and study routines prior to the demands required in Year 11 and 12. Students will be supported to complete targeted literacy and numeracy learning tasks that directly respond to identified areas of need and will be individualised for each student. This will be completed through the digital platform Education Perfect. Teachers will support and track student's progress and use the student's learning data to drive their teaching.

Construction of walls and doors in open learning spaces:

Our large open learning spaces will have walls and doors installed to give teachers and students the opportunity to learn in smaller classroom environments with less students sharing the same 'open plan' learning space. This will support the reduction of noise, movement and distraction throughout learning time. There will still be opportunity for the classrooms to be 'flexible' spaces when needed as some will still have removable partition walls, however they will no longer be considered 'open spaces'.

There is significant academic research that supports the need for children to learn in spaces that are not open plan and where noise, movement and distraction can be kept to a minimum.

Enhancement of the College Wellbeing team:

Next year we are increasing the number of qualified and experienced social workers connected to our school and available to support our students. This team will increase the already high level of expertise our young people, parents and carers can access when seeking support on wellbeing issues. We will be refining the referral process for students to access these support services and we hope to be able to triage more students to external agencies as needed as well as accessing the Department of Education's Student Support Services.

Our Wellbeing Team will include experienced social workers, nurse and an occupational therapist.

Communication via Compass:

Next year we will be opening more Compass 'chronicle' entries to be visible to parents. School staff use Compass chronicle to record important information regarding student wellbeing and management including positive work in class, positive involvement in school activities, overdue work and behavioural issues. When a staff member makes a chronicle entry parents and carers will receive a notification from Compass that an entry has been made. We hope that in doing this parents and carers will develop a stronger understanding of how their young person is engaging at school from day-to-day.

Year 8-10 Headstart program:

The excellence of the year 11 into 12 and year 10 into 11 Headstart programs are always celebrated by students, teachers and families. Having students experience their new subjects, teachers and routine before their summer break sets them up for success for their next year of education. Therefore, this program is being extended to all year groups. From November 27th to 8th December, students will take part in two weeks of their 2024 timetable, meeting their teachers, classmates and engaging in key skills and knowledge essential to their new subjects.

The Headstart program is **compulsory** and **all students** going into Years 8-10 in 2024 (so that's all of this year's Year 7-9 students) are required to attend school during this time. While students are not expected to have their 2024 books, they are all expected to be at school, in full school uniform, with the other resources they need to be ready to learn.

The changes outlined above are a significant financial investment from the College, that we feel will be of great benefit to the wellbeing and learning of our young people. As we move through 2024 we will continue to refine our work as a school and seek new and improved ways of actioning best practices that are supported by extensive research into their positive impact.

It's certainly an exciting time to be part of the Surf Coast Secondary College community!

Sincerely,



Shane Elevato
Acting Principal.