

*Thank-you **Lily** and Good afternoon everyone. A very warm welcome to all our guests, our families, friends and so great to see a many of our past colleagues... It is also a delight to have a number of our wonderful Alumni join us today..... our amazing classes of 2023 and 2024 and lovely to hear the recollections of Lua as well as tributes from Lily and Valentino and from our Foundation School Council President Steve Pearce....as you aptly said Val, someone we will always remain indebted to.*

*I feel very humbled to have the opportunity this afternoon to say a few words about the incredible leader, educator and person that is Ms Debby Chaves. We are all so blessed to have known you and to have benefited from your vision and passion.*

*So Seven and ½ years ago I walked into Beaumaris North Primary School into the rather small room that you see on the screen...and please forgive me Sherril Duffy as you were such wonderful hosts during that term...and so pleased that you have joined us today... and I might note that we did soon after my arrival move out to a more expansive accommodations at Beaumaris Nth. So, I took this somewhat poor resolution photo with my Blackberry phone... and I consider this the first photograph of Beaumaris Secondary College*

***So what do you see** in this photo, you see a Blackboard, written in chalk...Welcome to Beaumaris Secondary College.....it should, however read interim name as the school's name wasn't even ratified at that point. And what you see in the photo is one person only ...and at that stage...that was Beaumaris Secondary College ....only one employee. So this photograph as I said was taken only 7 and ½ years ago to think what we are as a school today is quite remarkable.*

*What you can't see from this photo, **however** is the passion, the innovation, the drive to build an amazing school. An amazing school **where the hearts and minds** of our students truly are at the centre of decision making,...and what you also cannot see from that image is an enormous heart. The heart, soul and vision of Beaumaris Secondary College. A heart that has personally appointed almost*

every member of our wonderful staff and a heart that has a deep care for **every** one of our students.

So I do stand here today on the one hand very selfish as I wish that you were not leaving Ms Chaves, but I also stand here very grateful for the opportunity to have worked alongside you building the wonderful school that we have today...but I don't wish to be selfish, I feel that we should be grateful, and it is only right that the vision, the passion, the talents of Ms Chaves, ....that they **can't just be ours**,..... and now as a Senior Education Improvement Leader **so many** schools stand to benefit from the talents of who I can comfortably say is **the most inspiring... and innovative educator** that I have had the privilege to work alongside in my career.

Ms Chaves, you are indeed an educational entrepreneur.

It is difficult to imagine Beaumaris Secondary College without you. I have thought a lot about how you replace such an inspirational leader....and I have come to the conclusion that the answer is that you don't. But you find a way to keep improving, growing and moving forward with **Curiosity, Optimism, Respect and standards of Excellence**. You have set the foundations Ms Chaves and I believe that we all play a role in honouring your legacy by ensuring that the **wonderful culture of learning and support** that exists in our school continues to flourish.

In building and leading this school Ms Chaves, **you have written our story**. And yes, there is some great data coming out of our school, but our story is so much more than that. So yes the rankings and the numbers...they are important and they serve a purpose, but **our story** is about a school where our students will **become their best selves**, where they feel safe, where they are connected and where they belong. It is wonderful to see our Alumni return and work in an array of areas including IT, maintenance, sport, tutoring and tech support and it filled our hearts in the **toughest of moments** when they returned in droves to support each other. That is the school that you have built Ms Chaves.

*I would ask, what other school has a Principal who **refuses** to leave the classroom and insists on teaching a class every year despite the significant demands of their role?? What other school has a Principal who trusts our Year 12s enough to take over the building at night and play hide and seek over three levels?*

*As I have said, it is very hard to imagine Beaumaris Secondary College without Ms Chaves and we all have an obligation to honour your legacy by continuing the journey of our wonderful school. Ms Chaves, it has been such an honour and a privilege to have been a part of your team.*

*Please join me **everyone** in welcoming our amazing Foundation Principal Ms Debby Chaves*