QUT Go Further Experience for Murri Students

On the 23rd April Grade 9 and 10 Indigenous students took a bus to Brisbane along with students from local high schools to take part in the QUT Go Further Experience. The camp was an opportunity for students to experience university life and broaden their horizons for the future.

After the long bus trip to Brisbane students participated in an afternoon of rotational activities at the QUT Caboolture campus before heading to Camp Warawee. Over the following 2 days students were involved in various hands on activities including a day at the QUT Gardens Point campus. Students participated in workshops throughout a range of different faculties before hearing from a range of guest speakers. The afternoon was filled with tours of the Museum and Library before once again returning to camp.

The next day students stayed at Camp Warawee and participated in raft building, high ropes and cultural activities. This was a fantastic day which was started with a corroboree by local Indigenous men. It was great to hear the students take an interest in the cultural stories as well as talk about their own heritage!

The students were then invited to the Suncorp Stadium to watch the Broncos verse the Rabbitohs Anzac Day clash. It was a fantastic game that was preceded with a short Anzac ceremony that was very touching in such a large stadium.

I have to congratulate the students on behalf of myself, Miss Dwyer and Mr Wiebusch for such outstanding behaviour and representation of Gladstone State High School. I was certainly very proud of the efforts of everyone involved. A special shout out goes to Suzie W, Tremaine B and Telia D who received a signed Broncos football from the QUT ambassadors for their outstanding behaviour and involvement throughout the camp.

I look forward to taking more of you along next year!

Thanks,
Miss Polglase
In the next three newsletters I will provide information about Autism; its characteristics, causes and diagnosis.

What is Autism?
Autism is a complex, lifelong disability.
People with Autism share the core features of social and communication difficulties, narrow interests and repetitive behaviours.
Autism is often referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), an umbrella term that encompasses a number of conditions including Autistic Disorder, Asperger Syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).
People on the Autism Spectrum experience:
- challenges in communicating and interacting with others,
- thinking in a flexible way,
- processing information from their senses and
- Adapting their behaviours to what can seem incredibly confusing and frustrating situations.
Despite having difficulties in these same core areas, no two people with Autism are the same.
People on the Autism spectrum may also have a significant intellectual impairment while others may have average or above average intelligence. Some may have little or no verbal language skills through to those who are highly verbal yet still have difficulty using these language skills socially. While it is a lifelong disability, people with Autism can learn and develop when provided with appropriate supports.

Source Autism Queensland
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Marisa Farlow
School based youth health nurse
School Wide Positive Behaviour

The main thing our children will be doing in their lives in the 21st century is learning; the world is evolving so rapidly it is essential that we have young adults leaving our schools with the habits and capabilities necessary to learn what they have to learn. These habits include being able to look at an issue or problem and:

- Knowing what to do when they don’t know what to do.
- Relate and understand how it connects to their world.
- Identify and find the information they need to address it.
- Develop a timeline to solve it.
- Analyse their findings and look for bias, patterns, inference and implications.
- Present what they learned with clarity and precision.
- Evaluate their thoughts and make sense of them in relation to their world.
- Make forecasts and predictions from their findings.

We need to cultivate these in their every day thoughts and behaviours so that they become embedded habits. This week’s focus is on building students’ learning and thinking power in this area by introducing them to reliable and resourceful research processes. They provide scaffolds, which enable students to be curious experimenters while at the same time moving forward logically in addressing the issue or problem and making balanced predictions.

Another purpose is to encourage a discerning disposition in them to judge the suitability and authenticity of material from the Net, books, software and resources they source for their research needs. Then once they have researched a topic, the process of correlating, presenting the information collected and then reaching meaningful conclusions are essential components to lifelong problem solving.

“I am easily satisfied with the very best.” Sir Winston Churchill
Chaplain Chat

Chaplaincy week is from the 18 – 23 May. On Monday, Years 8, 9 and 10 will participate in a presentation aimed at understanding Social Justice, grasping and actioning the vision that Thankfulness and Generosity can together change the world, realise that small ideas can bring about BIG change and realise the future is in their hands. Oftentimes, media has bad press about today’s teenagers. The presentation will challenge the stereotypes that have been placed on Generation Y. For further information, please review:  http://justmotivation.com.au/make-a-booking for more details. Hopefully the students will enjoy Az Hamilton’s sense of humour and communication ability and be inspired to know that they can make a positive impact on their community. If students want the rubber wristbands, they will be $1 each.

During the recent High Court Challenge, the Commonwealth rejected Mr Williams’ arguments, saying that Commonwealth legislation authorising school chaplaincy, and more than 400 other programs, is entirely valid. The Commonwealth Solicitor General pointed to the 2008 Melbourne Declaration of Education Goals that students are developed socially, emotionally, morally and spiritually - as well as intellectually and physically - and that school chaplaincy helps meet those educational goals. Schools understand, and the Commonwealth understands, that students who are well supported socially, emotionally and spiritually are better able to engage successfully with their education. That has been demonstrated in many studies and in student wellbeing strategies of both Commonwealth and state governments. High Court will deliver their findings later this year or early in 2015. If you would wish, please sign a statement of support on the SU website.

Yesterday was an amazing amount of fun as many students and supportive teachers and I had fun playing board games. There was lots of talk and laughter and the crunching of yummy biscuits. The aim is to foster relationship building amongst new students, students who speak additional languages and students who find making friends very challenging. Thank you Miss O’Sullivan and Miss MacFadden for your wonderful help on Tuesday.