The Peninsula Community of Schools believes that every Australian child has the right to a quality education. As a community we have a commitment to reducing the inequalities and closing the gap between Indigenous and non Indigenous students. Learning more about Indigenous Culture and the longer timelines of Australian history is one important way to close the space between us.

**NAIDOC Week Celebrations**

This year we have continued to celebrate the culture, history and achievements of our indigenous people during NAIDOC Week celebrations. The 2011 National NAIDOC Week theme is about taking responsibility for our future. To control the change we need to plan and take action to make it happen. It’s our future – Change:the next step is ours.

The Peninsula Community of Schools organised several competitions prior to NAIDOC Week so that student work could be displayed during school NAIDOC Week celebrations. Students had the opportunity to create their own art work or poster, class groups featured role models and achievers from the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander community through a Hall of Fame and schools entered a clothesline project using t shirts to display NAIDOC Week messages.

The NAIDOC Week launch was held at Elanora Heights Public School on Monday 27th June with a formal assembly opened by Guringai Elder Neil Evers. Students spoke about the importance of NAIDOC Week and a short film was shown about our visit to the Bulman School in the Northern Territory. Representatives from our 13 schools attended and after a bbq lunch everyone played Indigenous games.

On Tuesday 28th June all schools held a fundraising event to raise money for Ian Thorpe’s “Fountain For Youth” Literacy Backpack program.
Closing the Gap

Earlier this year The Peninsula Community of Schools (PCS) and Denistone East Public School recently donated their Coles Sports for Schools vouchers to Ian Thorpe’s “Fountain for Youth” charity. Families collected vouchers while shopping at Coles to turn into points to purchase sports equipment for the 13 Katherine Group of Schools in the Northern Territory. We recently had a letter of thanks from the students.

Dear Students at the Peninsula Community Schools,

We are the Bulman School Middle Years class and we are writing to you about the sports equipment that you donated to our school. We want to thank you very much!!

We just unpacked all the equipment and we were so excited to find lots of footies, basketballs and tennis balls, as well as the big carry bag to store them all in.

We took some photos unpacking the gear and we think you would like to see them, so we have attached some.

Thank you again, we appreciate it so much!

Yours sincerely,

Bulman School Middle Years Class

Levan, Lyndon, Sharia, Samantha, Regina, Chevonne, Rosemary, Sara, Ricardo, Adam, Raymond, Bessie, Danisha and Joshua.

Daruganora

Prior to our NAIDOC Week celebrations all Yr 6 leaders were invited to Macquarie University to take part in the Daruganora program. The Daruganora program revolves around indigenous studies and involves thinking skills and problem solving. Students began by attending a multimedia lecture about Aboriginal art and culture in one of Macquarie University’s lecture theatres, where they were also presented with a research problem to solve. Following the lecture, they were taken on a ‘walk in country’ tour of the campus that took in some of the representations of Indigenous culture on the University’s grounds, including sculptures, creek beds and other natural sites of significance. The University’s Senior Arts Curator Rhonda Davis then walked students through a purpose built Aboriginal art exhibition featuring works from the University’s extensive collection. Once the research “fieldtrip” ended all groups engaged in a world café where they shared their ideas and answers to the research questions. After a day of immersing ourselves in our Indigenous culture students were given the task of going back to school and working on ideas for NAIDOC Week as well as different ways they could raise funds for the Literacy Backpack program.
An Important Part of Our Community

A special mention this week goes to Mr. Geoff Bateman, a member of our staff and a parent representative on the PCS Advisory Council. Geoff is a member of the Mona Vale SLSC and last week was awarded the government’s National Medal in recognition of the 36 years he has spent patrolling the beaches at Mona Vale. Geoff started patrolling at age 13 after his father, who was also a member signed him up. The National Medal is awarded to those who provide long service to the community in hazardous circumstances. Well done Geoff, we are very proud of you!

Duke of Edinburgh

The PCS Duke of Edinburgh Award program is a highly successful initiative linking the individual D of E schemes of the three PCS high schools. Duke of Edinburgh has been run as a PCS initiative since 2008 and enables us to share knowledge, training programs and equipment. Currently the program involves approximately 100 students across the Bronze, Silver and Gold levels of the award.

Bronze:
- Preliminary expedition to Marra Marra National Park.
  2 days bushing walking with on and off track navigation. Camping one night.
- Test expedition to Dharug National Park.
- 2 days bushing walking with on and off track navigation. Camping one night

Silver:
- Preliminary expedition to Ben Bullen State Forest.
  3 days bushing walking with on and off track navigation. Camping 3 nights.
- Test expedition to Blue Mountains National Park (Glenbrook)
  3 days bushing walking with on and off track navigation. Camping 2 nights.

Gold:
- Preliminary expedition to Kosciuszko National Park (Long Plain Region).
  4 Days bushing walking with on and off track navigation. Camping 4 nights.
- Test expedition to Kosciuszko National Park (Jagungal Wilderness Region).
  5 days bushing walking with on and off track navigation. Camping 4 nights.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is a voluntary and non-competitive program that actively encourages students to undertake Community Service, Skill and Physical Recreation requirements outside of school hours. An Adventurous Journey component of the award also requires students to complete 2 expeditions for each level of the award, which are organised and run by staff. The coordinators are: M.Moylan, D.Gavin (BHS), M.Tan (NSHS) and J. Austen (PHS).

The Duke of Edinburgh Award provides students with an excellent opportunity to challenge themselves both physical and mentally whilst getting to experience Australia’s bush environment in a variety of conditions. The award program also forges greater links between the schools and the wider community and at the same time develops participants’ confidence and skills in leadership, initiative and team work.
Artist at Work
Congratulations to Carly Zinga (Year 11) who has been recommended for short-listing for the Moran Photographic Prize. The Moran is one of the most prestigious competitions for photography in Australia and open to all ages, it is said to rival the Archibald. Over the holidays we discovered that Carly’s photograph (see below) has been named a FINALIST in this amazing competition. This is terrific recognition for a truly talented artist; well done Carly, you are an inspiration to us all.

Young Einsteins at Avalon
Young Einsteins is a project that has been developed with Macquarie University as part of our STEM Project (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and Enrichment program. This program has been trialled at Avalon Public School this term with 64 students participating. Young Einsteins – Imaginative Minds @ Work is an investigative design project. Students have investigated great minds from our past, explored different design processes, problem solved a range of invention scenarios and developed innovative designs. The students have happily risen to each and every challenge they have been given.

The program concluded with an Invention Convention where students were able to present their ideas about design and inventions. With students as an audience, the “Inventors” were asked questions about their design and the design process as well as being given both written and oral feedback about their invention.
Melinda Tankard Reist author, speaker, commentator, blogger and advocate for women and girls presented to the Peninsula Community of Schools Staff, Parents and Senior girls at the start of this term.

Melinda is an advocate for women and girls and she is working to highlight and address the sexualisation of girls in Australia and globally. Her commentary has been published and broadcast in Australia and overseas. She has appeared recently on the ABC, Channel Seven’s ‘The Morning Show’, ABC 666 ‘Keynote Speakers’ and 2GB Drive, to name a few. Melinda has also been named in the Who’s Who of Women (Australia) and World Who’s Who of Women. She is the author of the recently released Getting Real: Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls.

Melinda gave an inspirational presentation. She spoke with great knowledge, understanding and passion about young women and their situation in Australia today. Melinda showed us image after image of how women and girls are exploited through the media. There was universal agreement that the Melinda Tankard Reist talk organised for the high schools and provided to senior girls, parents and staff (in separate sessions) was successful and from a parents’ perspective, provided everyone with an insight into the insidious nature of sexualisation of girls in the media and advertising. Staff, parents and students are using this as a catalyst for ongoing discussions within their schools. By raising this awareness in our school and our extended social communities we can work towards moderating the campaigns that have been allowed to run previously. Check out her website at www.collectiveshout.org

Brett Murray

While the senior girls worked with Melinda the senior boys enjoyed a presentation by Brett Murray. Brett is well known for inspiring others. He has been nominated 4 times for Australian of the Year and is one of the nations most sought after speakers and anti-bullying campaigners. Brett has represented and competed at State level in no less than 5 sports including being NSW State Champion Boxer. Brett is an international author, a writer, director and producer. He has experience in both the political and business worlds.

Brett’s presentation Man-up for the C21 - being a man in modern society” was truly inspirational. His presentation was full of humour, energy, unquenchable passion and infectious enthusiasm, and he will have made an impact on all who heard him. Great examples and shared experiences were appreciated by the audience. One of the favourite phrases was “you have a greater future, than you have a past”

The PCS Advisory Council

Each term the Advisory Council of the Peninsula Community of Schools which is made up of parents, students, principals and our community partners, meet to discuss the current project and activities within the PCS and our vision for future directions. At the Term 2 meeting our 3 student members - Katie Bosler, Madi Smithies and Alissa Abrenica - were given a vote of thanks for their help with the Melinda Tankard Reist presentation and were presented with their badges.

The Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli will be meeting with the Advisory Council next term to look at some of our recent initiatives.
Sculptures On The Plateau

Bilgola Plateau Public School is involved in an art project this term to develop teacher and student skills in sculpture as an art form. At the completion of the project (during Education Week) there will be a sculptural trail around the school for parents and students to follow and enjoy.

The project began with a local artist giving a two hour hands on workshop to teachers on various types of sculptures using everyday and recyclable materials. Teachers were then asked to think about ideas for their class sculptures using similar materials choosing fauna, flora or water as a theme. The idea was to create sculptures that would be representative of the local bushland and coastal community and enhance the school environment. The artist then spent 20 minutes with each teacher discussing their ideas, working out materials to use and putting strategies into place. Each class was then allocated a one hour lesson with the artist to get them started.

The parent community have been very enthusiastic, many offering their assistance in the classroom or finding appropriate materials. Sculptures range from wooden representation of native fauna, to metal bugs and paper maché jellyfish. Each class has a designated area in the school grounds for their sculptures to be exhibited.

Teachers are in the sculpture frame of mind to such a degree that they created a ‘Sorry Day’ sculpture in the office area, inspired by a similar sculpture in an art gallery in Canberra. Each class wrote a ‘Sorry Day’ message on ribbons in the colours of the Aboriginal flag which were tied to bamboo sticks and displayed in an upturned flower pot. Visitors to the office area can read the messages.

Here are some photos of some of the sculptures completed so far.
Primary Colour Awards for Collaroy Plateau

Collaroy Plateau PS Students received prestigious Primary Colour Awards from Acting Director General of Education and Communities, Pam Christie; School Education Director Peter Pickett and a delegate on behalf of Legal Branch Officer Michael Waterhouse. The artworks, created using digital software in ICT lessons, were selected by DET Executive Managers located in Bridge Street or at Regional centres across NSW; who had written a brief description about themselves, their interests and the type of artwork they would be looking for.

Over 400 students from 52 schools entered their artworks. Only 31 were chosen to be framed and put on display in the Atrium at Head Office in Bridge Street Sydney. The students all met together for a celebratory exhibition and afternoon soirée to be congratulated by VIPs, Teachers and family guests.

Official Launch Cromer Kansai Cultural and Language Trial

On Wednesday 25th May, Cromer Public School, in partnership with Panasonic hosted the official launch of their Cultural and Language Program with Kansai University Elementary school in Japan. The program involves Year 4 students linking with Year 4 students in Japan twice a week through new Panasonic technology incorporating high definition video-conferencing. Over the period of the trial, students and staff from both schools will learn from, and with each other in a way never thought possible in the past.

Robotics Fun Day @Macquarie University

As part of Australian Engineering Week, Macquarie University is hosting an afternoon of robotics fun and learning. Activities include lectures and displays, the opportunity to drive and program robots built by students competing at the international level, or win a prize for the best Lego robot built by a school student. So bring yours along and enter! Robot enthusiasts of all ages are welcome to join in the fun.

When: Sunday 31st July, 2011  
Time: 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm  
Where: Building E7B Courtyard, Macquarie University, Balaclava Road, North Ryde, NSW  
Cost: Free  
Parking: Free parking is available in F7 and F3A car parks. (See over for location details)  
Map: Go to P27 on map for F7 car park, and S26 on map for F3A car park  
Enquiries: For more information about the Robotics Fun Day contact Luan Heimlich  
Tel: (02) 9850 7413 Email: luan.heimlich@mq.edu.au  
To find out more about FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics go to: www.engineering.mq.edu.au/community/first

Congratulations to **Michael Welsh** who has been competing in the New South Wales State Wakeboarding Championships. Michael gained first place overall in the Summer Series (Advanced Males) and then won the State Title in the Junior Men category. As a result of these fine efforts Michael then received the huge honour of being invited to ride in the Moomba Festival in Melbourne. The festival attracts approximately 700,000 visitors from around Australia.
Avalon Public School celebrated NAIDOC Week with a clothes line project – every child in the school created a t shirt for the display.

Our Sponsors Rod Jones First National Real Estate – What a Team!