The Peninsula Community of Schools is committed to nurturing lifelong learning and leadership development through its Student Leadership Program. This program saw me presenting to the Primary School Captains and Vice-Captains on Wednesday 5 March 2014. The focus of the presentation was the leadership skills that they will need to support them throughout 2014, their secondary and tertiary education, and lifetime careers.

The brief asked me to deliver "Ten Top Tips" for successful leadership. Having great faith in the students' ability, rather than deliver, I chose to workshop the session and assist these outstanding young leaders in developing their own agreed set of "Ten Top Tips". The session was an incredible success. I spent a short amount of time outlining the five leadership concepts of the Department of Education and Communities Leadership Capability Framework: Educational Leadership; Organisational Leadership; Strategic Leadership; Interpersonal Leadership; and Personal Leadership.

Your student leaders worked comfortably in school teams to develop some ideas around their designated capability area. Two representatives from each school then sat with another school working on the same capability element. We then merged into five groups to select two agreed ideas for refinement in each capability area. Spokespeople, supported by the rest of the team, stood to present their leadership statements to the greater Peninsula Community of Schools Student Leadership Team.

Having articulate skills in "managing up", your children have tasked me with the duty of collating their work to develop the first ever Public Schools Student Leadership Capability Framework. As you can see our children went far beyond developing "Ten Top Tips". As we understand so clearly in Public Education, when the learning activities have meaning in the local context the capacity of our students to develop exceptional work is limitless.

It was a rare honour to be invited to work with such an incredible team of young leaders. With Leadership capacity being developed in this way by the Peninsula Community of Schools the future of our cherished way of life is in very capable hands.

Dean White, Director | Public Schools NSW
Mona Vale PS and NRL Launch Literacy Initiative

Sea Eagles hooker and Mona Vale Public School parent, Matt Ballin, launched the NRL's “Rugby League Reads” program that helps to break down the stereotypes that sports stars don't like to read. Matt features in a new series of readers that focus on personal stories from NRL stars. Matt's story focuses on health and wellbeing.

Matt joined with his son Fletcher and Year 6 students to discuss the importance of reading, telling students that learning to read is the most important skill they need. Year 6 students asked Matt how he supports reading at home with Fletcher and he said that, "as a dad it is important to read with your child and to read in front of your children". Matt also discussed the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle being vital if you want to be successful, pointing out that a happy, healthy person is more likely to be able to study and learn.

Matt's last tip to Year 6 was, “Don't give up, if reading is difficult keep at it,” he said, “success comes from hard work.”

Barrenjoey High School Students Beyond School

Barrenjoey High School students performed very well at the HSC last year. More than 70% of all results received were in the top three Performance Bands.

We have just completed a survey of the 2013 departed HSC students regarding their post-school destinations.

Of our 77 students: 43 are currently enrolled and attending University, TAFE or private college courses (including 9 with apprenticeships); 18 are taking a GAP year but are enrolled to attend University/TAFE in 2015 and 14 are working.

Impressively this means that 56% of last year’s graduating class is currently engaged in tertiary education, with the likelihood of that figure becoming 74% in 2015 when the deferring students join them.

The most popular TAFE courses are within the Northern Sydney area with 10 of the 23 choosing to study locally and the most common universities being Macquarie and Sydney University.
Narrabeen Lakes Public School National Ride 2 School Day

The students of Narrabeen Lakes Public School participated in National Ride2School day on Wednesday 19th March by walking, wheeling, scooting and skate boarding to school. Since 2008, NLPS has participated every year in Ride2School day. The students look forward with great excitement every year to the event. During past events, there have even been students arrive on horseback. Families who live a greater distance away are encouraged to do ‘part journeys’ – drive half way, then walk or wheel to school.

An environmental, safety, or active healthy travel theme is chosen for the day and students decorate their bike, scooter or skateboard. They can also dress up and this year’s theme was ‘Super Hero’.

What excitement as students started arriving at school! There were so many students, parents and teachers dressed in their ‘Super Hero’ outfits and so many decorated bikes. There were Spider Man bikes, Batman scooters, Cat Woman, Wonder Woman, ‘Eco Warrior’ and ‘Compost King’ outfits. Even Bindi Irwin and her Wildlife Warrior bike arrived from Australia Zoo in Queensland, thanks to Keoni in year 3, as well as an appearance by ‘Ocean Man’ and ‘Brats on Bikes’. There were bikes decorated with flowers, and covered in newspapers, streamers, and environmental messages. The ‘Wonder Worm’ scooter was a huge hit with its green bucket load of colourful worms, thanks to Phoebe in year 1. ‘Super Science Woman’ (aka Mrs Clark) made a special appearance with her mini, magical, magnifying glass.

Sadly, Mr. Rankin (Principal) and Mr. Phillips (Assistant Principal) were nowhere to be seen during all the excitement, but the ‘Riddler’ from Batman, dressed in a fine, lime green suit, put in an appearance, along with a strange looking fellow, with long black hair, claiming the title of ‘Bogan Man’. Mr. Rankin? Mr. Phillips? We can only wonder …

Ride2School ambassadors (year 1-6 students) assisted tirelessly on the day to make it a tremendous success. Ride2School ambassadors attended lunchtime meetings to plan and allocate roles for the day. Ride2School ambassadors were at school by 8.00am helping set up bike parking stations, tagging and parking bikes, and handing out stickers, information brochures, show bags, safety vests and prizes. The ambassadors ensured the success of this important day on the school calendar.

The NLPS parent club provided healthy breakfast treats for students and parents as they arrived at school. Parents donated home baked treats, breakfast foods and fruit to support the ethos of active and healthy travel on the day. NLPS would love to see students keep up the walking and wheeling throughout the year, as the benefits greatly assist in the personal and academic development of every student. Students feel fresh and alert as they start their day. They are more likely to reach the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity they need. Best of all, there are fewer cars around the school, which eases ‘drop off congestion’.
Collaroy Plateau Swimming Success

Collaroy Plateau Public School has recently had great success in the pool, with many long-standing school records being smashed. Our school carnival was highly contested with many close finishes on the day.

Our Zone Swimming team represented CPPS with pride and achieved many personal bests at the Pittwater Zone Carnival. The team was successful in taking out both the Overall and Handicap PSSA trophies, an enviable feat and one which we have not achieved before.

Such success at the Zone Carnival led to seventeen of our students progressing to the Northern Sydney Regional Carnival at Homebush, where we were lucky enough to be represented in all relay events. Again, this is an outstanding achievement and shows the depth of talent and sportsmanship at CPPS.

Kyle Neville will now represent Sydney North at the State Swimming Carnival in April and we wish him every success.

Narrabeen North Farewells Mr Blanchfield

After an amazing career spanning 38 years, Mr Robert Blanchfield is retiring. Mr Blanchfield started teaching in the country at a small school called Hermidale, between Nyngan and Cobar in the middle of New South Wales where he taught K-2 in one classroom. He then came back to teach at Galston, Balgowlah, St Ives, Dee Why, and Narrabeen North and had 1 year where he taught in Seattle, America, as well as 2 years as a Maths Consultant.

Mr Blanchfield has been the Principal of NNPS for 7 years. His achievements are many, but the building of the new NNPS library and classrooms really stand out. One of the other accomplishments during this time has been the way in which the school has grown substantially over the years. Mr Blanchfield also feels that finishing off at Narrabeen with a whole wireless network will be a wonderful thing for the new principal and for the teachers to be able to use in their teaching and learning to really make it exciting for the students throughout the whole school. Mr Blanchfield has utilised his skills as a Maths Consultant by having students participate in Maths Club for many years. He has inspired many students to think about the different ways they can solve problems, developing creative and critical thinking skills for high achieving maths students.

Mr Blanchfield’s well-known love of travel has inspired his teaching including learning about other countries, and cultures. This next year will be a ‘gap’ year, but at this stage he is not sure what this will involve. After his gap year, Mr Blanchfield is going to do volunteer work with a friend in a hospital. Also in 2015, he may even come and do Maths Club! Even though he won’t be principal, he is thrilled to be coming back to see the exciting things that people will be doing for the 75th Anniversary of NNPS in September.

Farewell Mr Blanchfield; we will miss you!
A Joyfully Harmonious Day at Elanora

The students of Elanora Heights Public School joined joyfully together on Harmony Day to show Everyone Belongs. They validated Harmony Day as a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home – from the traditional owners of this land to those who have come from many countries around the world – by coming together as one with decorated coloured rope, symbolically 'joined' on the day.

During the preceding week each class were given coloured lengths of rope and asked to talk about how these ropes, or their intertwined strands could be used to symbolise harmony. Some classes pulled the coloured strands apart and re-tied them to show how differences can work together and still be as strong.

Other classes cut out pictures of people in different native dress and attached them to show diversity; traced around their hands and wrote on the palm what harmony meant to them; decorated symbols of peace with multi-coloured streamers, and wrote poems with harmony as a theme.

All these lengths of rope were joined into one long piece on the day and songs were enjoyed together. Some of our teachers and students greeted the assembly with messages in Thai, Armenian, Spanish and Farsi then we all sang the Australian national anthem together. It was a proud and respectful moment for everyone.

At Newport We Can Do It!

At Newport PS, our students have been participating in many activities tied to our Newport Quality Behaviour Program. The program encompasses social emotional learning for students, as well as protective behaviours for preventing bullying and cyber-bullying.

The students have been learning about the characters from the ‘You Can Do It’ program. These characters are designed to help students develop positive social-emotional-motivational attitudes towards themselves and their learning. The characters include Penny Persistence, Oscar Organisation, Gabby Get Along, Connie Confidence and Ricky Resilience.

Penny Persistence keeps on trying when things seem hard and not fun. Persistence means trying hard and not giving up when schoolwork feels like it’s too difficult or boring. Penny gives everything a go. The positive habits of mind that help to develop a young person’s persistence include:

- I Can Do It – thinking;
• Giving effort – the harder I try the more successful I will be; and

• Working tough – thinking that in order to be successful in the future, I sometimes have to do things that are not easy or fun in the present.

Our five keys to school success are persistence, organisation, getting along, confidence and resilience. The students at Newport PS have improved personal development, a readiness to learn, excellent classroom behaviour, strong academic performance and are having fun.

At Newport, we can do it. Can You?

Wheeler Heights PS Woolworths Rewards Help Others

Recently Deputy Principal Liz Armstrong & SRC Co Ordinator Tracey Mavromatis visited the Royal Far West School (RFWS) in Manly to donate some wonderful teaching resources that WHPS earned during last year’s “Woolworths Earn & Learn” project.

The resources included hand puppets, percussion instruments, numeracy & literacy games and big books.

The SRC of 2013 nominated the school to be the recipient of these goods.

The Royal Far West School works with over 1500 students a year (3-18 years) from country NSW, often in remote areas of the state. They cater for a range of developmental, learning and behavioural difficulties. It was lovely to see the children explore the resources and enjoy them!

The Principal & teachers from RFWS asked us to extend their appreciation to the Wheeler Heights PS community.

Avalon Public School – Pia’s Phenomenal Pool Performances

Students and staff of Avalon Public School are in awe of the outstanding swimming performances from Year 6 student, Pia Lenarduzzi during Term 1. At Avalon School, Pittwater Zone and Sydney North Area carnivals, Pia has raced superbly in all events contested and has established many new records at school and zone level.

She was placed 1st in the six events she entered at the school carnival and in the process broke the school record in every one of these events. Four of these records were set way back in 1994 by Laini Harris, who went on to swim at National Championships.
For the second successive year, Pia has been awarded the “Richard Hoskins Trophy” for the Outstanding Swimmer of the Meet at the Pittwater Zone Carnival conducted at the Warringah Aquatic Centre. Again she dominated competition, winning all events she entered and set new records in the 4 x 50 metre Senior Girls’ Individual Medley and Senior Girls’ 50 metre Breaststroke. Both these records were set in 2004 by Brooke Miller.

At the Sydney North Area Carnival held at the Sydney Aquatic Centre, Homebush, Pia once again swam superbly in elite competition. In winning the 4 x 50 metre Senior Girls’ Individual Medley, she bettered her personal best time by three seconds. She also placed 1st in the 12/13 years 50 metre Breaststroke, 2nd in the Open 100m Freestyle and 3rd in the 12 years 50 metre Freestyle.

She will swim in each of these events at the NSW.PSSA Swimming Championships during the last week of term. A dedicated and tenacious swimmer, it would not surprise to see Pia set new personal bests during these championships.

**Cromer Public School Harmony Day**

Cromer Public School students participated in Harmony Day on 20th March.

Harmony Day is about community participation, inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. This year’s theme was about everyone belonging.

The day began with students wearing a variety of coloured clothing. Students worked with their buddy classes and read stories from different cultures. They discussed the different cultures and talked about where their families had originated from.

The students then designed a puzzle piece and paper chain with their buddy to show that:

- Our society is made up of different people from different backgrounds.
- While we are unique, we all share the goal of wanting to live together in harmony, peace and understanding. We must respect other’s religion, gender and race.
- We must not accept hate, violence or unfair treatment of any person or group.
- We must strive to give all Australians equal opportunities and assist those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We are proud to be Australian.

The day concluded with a picnic lunch on the oval with many students participating in a variety of games. The students were a ‘harmonious rainbow’ of colour throughout the day.
**Bilgola Plateau PS**

Jet setting Bilgola Plateau journeyed around the world during Multicultural Day on Thursday 27th March 2014.

The enthusiastic tour guides were small groups of Year 6 students. Each group chose a country then devised a PowerPoint presentation detailing fascinating facts about that place. Colourful crafts, energetic games/dancing and tasty food samples were also prepared for other students to experience some significant cultural aspects from each destination.

This year’s Year 6 decided to choose some countries that were less familiar to Bilgola students: Tonga, United Arab Emirates, Cuba, Poland, Zimbabwe and Papua New Guinea were some of these.

In class groups, the younger students travelled to four of these countries throughout the morning having ‘passports’ stamped as they followed their itinerary.

Students enjoyed delicious ‘multicultural’ lunch orders supplied by the canteen then participated in a vibrant and noisy incursion by Drumbeats in the afternoon with hosts from Malta and Africa.

An absolutely wonderful and memorable day was had by all.

**Narrabeen Sports High School World of Maths Day**

Last Monday Narrabeen hosted the World of Maths Day which was a fabulous opportunity for students in Years 7 and 8 to experience Maths in a user friendly and hands on manner. It was a great success, with all students working in teams to problem solve the various puzzles and activities presented. Opportunities like this are important for students as Maths is presented in real world terms. Additionally all students have recently been working on Manga High, an online computer Maths program which presents Maths in easy to understand, clear formats. A special thank you to our hard working Maths Head Teacher Michael Palme for organising these opportunities.

**Building our capacity - Peninsula Community of Schools update**

Narrabeen Sports is an active member of the PCS. Our involvement benefits Narrabeen Sports directly and indirectly. Through building the capacity of our feeder Primary Students as seen in the recent Young Leaders Program, these skills will flow into our high schools in the years which follow.

Two weeks ago the PCS coordinated the extension test for Year 7 2015, held at our school to ensure we are extending the learning capacity of students on the Peninsula. The PCS builds capacity in both students and staff through increased opportunities made available as a result of its relationship with Macquarie University and our professional link with Adobe. The outcome for our teaching staff is the direct access to opportunities to become more proficient in pedagogy and the implementation of technology in teaching and learning. Such ongoing and relevant Teacher Professional Learning builds the capacity of our staff. In everyday terms, Narrabeen Sports benefits from the curriculum sharing arrangements we have with the other two high schools. This offers a greater range of subject choices for our students.
Pittwater High School – Dinner With Mahboba

Mahboba invited Ms Ferris and four students to represent Pittwater High at a dinner for Nowruz, the Afghani New Year Celebration. Fern McNulty (Year 12), Rosalind Hardy (Year 12) and ourselves, Sam Groom and Meagan Story, were in attendance alongside Ms Ferris and students and teachers from Cherrybrook Technology, Auburn Girls, Asquith Girls and Mackellar Girls High Schools.

Mahboba is an Afghani woman who immigrated to Australia via Pakistan to escape the war-torn environment she grew up in. She is the founder of Mahboba’s Promise, which is an organisation that supports Afghani orphans and widows. The prefect body, with the aid of Ms Ferris and Ms Ferguson, organised Spirit/Multicultural Day as a fundraiser. On this day Mahboba made a visit to our assembly giving a presentation outlining the foundations of her Promise. Our school raised around $2000 which Ms Ferris then matched.

On Friday 21 March we were guests at Mahboba’s house in North Ryde to celebrate at her family’s annual Nowruz dinner. She cooked a Nowruz meal for us to share and enlightened us with the traditions of the Afghani New Year. Luckily, in Afghani traditions guests are expected to eat a lot of food, allowing us to indulge in the feast, and spicing up the event was the occasional unexpected chilli. We got to socialise with the other students and got to know Mahboba’s family. Her son spoke about his experiences in the HSC, giving us valuable pointers in how to succeed. Mahboba also made a speech thanking us for supporting her and her promise, telling us how our contributions and money raised will go towards enabling her to continue empowering Afghani schools resulting in higher education levels within the female community. After dessert we learnt an Afghani dance and started saying our farewells.

We thank Mahboba enormously for allowing us into her house on such a significant night on the Afghani calendar. Thank you very much to Ms Ferris for taking the four of us - it was a wonderful experience and one we won’t forget.

Sam Groom and Meagan Story (Year 11)

The Peninsula Community of Schools would like to wish all staff and students a wonderful Easter break.