From the Principal’s Desk

I would like to welcome all of our new families to the Swinburne Senior Secondary College community. This year we will have a student cohort of approximately 435 students with just on 275 being new to the college. As in previous years, our students travel from across the greater Melbourne region with some 140 postcodes being represented.

The academic year has begun extremely well and I would like to thank the many parents who have contacted us to express their delight with the start of the year for their son or daughter.

Each year the new student body exhibits some similar characteristics that of previous years and the 2016 group is no different. However staff have noticed that this group have arrived very well prepared for their studies and have settled into a routine already. There is genuine excitement about what this group has brought to the college and I look forward to seeing their substantial potential blossom throughout the year.

I hope that every parent has been contacted by your child’s Mentor during the first few weeks. The Mentor is the key contact and the “first port of call” for the vast majority of issues that may arise during the year.

Over the next few weeks all new students will undertake a general ability test designed by ACER called the AGAT (ACER General Ability Test). The test is conducted online over 40 minutes. The results will be available immediately and provide teachers with a “heads up” on the general ability of students in their classes. Individual student reports of their results will be forwarded to each student’s Mentor for distribution.

I look forward to meeting all parents at the upcoming events outlined in this newsletter.

School Council
Help Wanted! This year we have vacancies for three parent representatives.

These three vacancies have a term of office from March 2016 to March 2018 (2 years).

Nominations for the three parent vacancies on School Council will be taken from Tuesday 16 February and will close on Tuesday 23 February at 4:00pm. If you are interested in standing for school council and would like to receive a nomination form or would like to know more about the role, responsibilities and meeting times please contact Michael O’Brien on 88624400 or email obrien.michael.b@edumail.vic.gov.au

VCE Season of Excellence 2016
We are extremely pleased to announce that four of our 2015 graduating students have been included in this year’s VCE Season of Excellence. Inez Holquinn (Studio Art) and Lauren Fung (Studio Art Photography) are in Top Arts, Lauren Hart-McKinnon in Top Designs and Tommy Castles in Top Class Music.
Please check this website for viewing and performance details

Top Class Music
Concert 3: Thursday 10 March, 6:00pm, at the Melbourne Recital Centre Southbank

Top Designs
Friday 18 March to Sunday 10 July at the Melbourne Museum, Carlton

Top Arts
Friday 11 March to Sunday 10 July at the Ian Potter Centre, NGV Australia

Assistant Principal’s News
Welcome back to the 2016 school year - it has been a good start to the year and students have settled into college routine well.

During the first week, Year 11 and 12 students participated in our Orientation Program. These sessions focussed on exploring learning styles, study and revision habits and evaluating their learning environment at home. The program also incorporated a session on approaches to your VCE by Nick Clark, Director of Welfare at St Kevin’s and a former Swinburne teacher, and a session with Headspace Hawthorn on the work they do with schools to improve mental health and wellbeing of young people.

All students were given information on our Assessment and VCE Policies.

I would like to encourage parents to regularly check our website as it contains all of our important dates including examinations, assessment weeks, parent-teacher conference sessions and so on. Other information includes access to the Compass Login and daily bell times.

I wish all the students success for 2016.

Robert Lewkowicz
Assistant Principal

VCE/VCAL Information Evening

Parents, guardians and students are invited to our annual VCE/VCAL Information Evening on Tuesday 16 February. The night will begin at 6.30pm and will provide an opportunity to meet with teachers for informal discussions. From 7.00pm the formal part of the evening will commence, with the Principal introducing staff including key personnel and mentors. This event is a great opportunity for you to learn more about the VCE, VCAL, College Policies and all of the differences between Swinburne and other education providers.

We look forward to seeing you.

Hugh Glenn (VCE Manager)
Danni Bunker (VCAL Manager)

Elevate Workshop for Parents

All parents and students are invited to a free session conducted by a group called Elevate on Tuesday 1 March at 6:30pm in the college auditorium.

The workshop is designed to be run as an open forum with opportunities for discussion. Parents will be able to ask our study skills experts any questions they have about being the parent of a senior secondary school student. Typical questions are:

• How do I help my child become more motivated?
• How do I help my child improve their time management?
• What work should my child be doing?
• How do I help my child deal with distractions?

From the Year 12 Manager’s Office
I would like to welcome everyone back to Swinburne Senior for 2016.

Year 12 Students have started the year well, engaging in a variety of studies that they chose way back in Term 4, 2015. The students have been enthusiastic in the way they have approached their subjects and should be well into the swing of things by now.

Students have had the opportunity to make changes to their programs in the first two weeks, but as of Friday 12 February we are no longer accepted any more changes to student programs. Each subject has had 4 classes each and we believe that it is too difficult for students to catch up on the work they have missed after this date.

I would like to think that students have set up their year and are working on developing consistent and productive work routines.

Each Year 12 Student should have:
1. A Term Planner/Calendar where all of their important assessments are marked down
2. An electronic or hard copy diary where they can map out their week and make lists for each day
3. A designated study area at home
4. The appropriate materials for each of their classes

We are looking forward to meeting some of the parents/guardians at the VCE/VCAL Information Evening on Tuesday 16 February at 6:30pm.

Joel Guye
Year 12 Manager

From the Year 11 Managers’ Office
The Year 11 Managers extend a warm welcome to all of the parents and guardians of the Year 11 cohort for 2016.

We have seen a very positive transition for students starting at SSSC this year. Attendance has been high and it has been great to see the students making friends and quickly finding their feet in their new environment. The Orientation Program gave students a chance to familiarise themselves with the college, their peers and teachers and it was great to see students actively engaging in this program. We hope that your son/daughter has been returning home each night with positive stories of their Swinburne journey so far.

By now, you should have received a letter with your log on details for Compass School Manager and are hopefully familiarising yourself with its many functions. You should have also received either an introductory email or phone call from your son/daughter’s Mentor Teacher. The Mentor Teacher will be taking care of your son/daughter throughout the year and you are encouraged to contact them whenever an issue arises or if you are wanting to check on your child’s progress.

The Compass system can be used to email your child’s Mentor and subject teachers. We make it our aim as mentors to keep in close contact with parents and guardians to help students achieve success in Year 11 and prepare to Year 12. For more serious matters you can contact one of the Year 11 Managers.

The VCE/VCAL Information Night on the 16th of February provides an opportunity to meet and have a chat with your son/daughter’s Mentor Teacher and subject teachers and we all look forward to putting faces to names after the first few weeks of introductions.

Again, welcome to Swinburne, we look forward to working with you and your children for a successful and enjoyable year.

Roy, Mike, Emily
Year 11 Managers

The Kooyong Student Prize 2015
On the evening of Wednesday 9 December 2015 a special presentation ceremony for the second annual 2015 Kooyong Student Prize was conducted at MCC Kew Sports Club in Kew. The presentation evening saw almost 300 students, family and friends celebrate the unique contributions made to our community by local students.

The Kooyong Student Prize is awarded to students currently enrolled in the Kooyong electorate nominated by their school principal for meeting the following criteria:

• Excellence in academic and extra-curricular pursuits;
• Leadership amongst peers;
• A strong commitment to upholding the school’s values, and strengthening the community at-large.

School principals were invited to nominate two senior students from their school each year. Schools offering both primary and secondary education are invited to choose from students in years 10 to 12, while schools with only primary education choose from years 5 to 6.

Prize winners were presented with a medallion, certificate and lapel pin to mark their achievement and each school has a perpetual Kooyong Student Prize shield, engraved with the names of annual recipients.
The Food and Technology program is already well in progress. We have learnt and practiced two complex processes/techniques ready for the Unit 4 SAT Folio. Above (photograph), Gabriella proudly shows off her magnificent hand-rolled sushi!

Vivienne Hogan
Food and Technology Teacher

Compass School Manager
The school uses a product called Compass School Manager to automate a number of administrative processes. Using our parent portal you will be able to:
- View up-to-date class and school attendance information
- Approve or enter upcoming or past absences for your son/daughter
- Download, print and approve upcoming excursions
- Access information regarding upcoming events and news
- Access your child's progress reports
- Book your Parent/Student/Teacher conferences

A letter explaining how to access Compass School Manager and login details has been sent to all families.

How to access the SAC/SAT Dates Calendar through Compass School Manager

Step 1. Login to Compass using your username and password which was sent to you via mail.

Step 2. Hover your cursor over the Star on the top toolbar (See picture below).

Step 3. Click on the SAC/SAT Dates menu.

Step 4. You will be asked for a username and password please enter (case sensitive) curric\parent as your username and Access1* as the password (See below).

Step 5. You will arrive at the below screen after you successfully log in. You can navigate through days.
Special Exam Arrangement Applications
Students may require Special Exam Arrangements due to a physical or psychological condition or for educational reasons.

VCAA have requested that applications for Special Exam Arrangements for Year 12 exams are submitted by Friday 4 March.

The appropriate documentation needs to be provided to the school so we can make an application for the required arrangements for the Year 12 exams. If a student is in Year 11 but doing a Year 12 subject an application will need to be prepared for that one study.

If you have any questions or think your child may need Special Exam Arrangements please contact Hugh Glenn (VCE Manager) or Elizabeth Reardon (Welfare Manager) as soon as possible so a timely application can be made.

Hugh Glenn
VCE Manager

VET in School Program
VET classes have now commenced for the year. Most students have successfully attended their first class for the year. Attendance at VET programs is important as students are only allowed 4 absences per year without putting the completion of their course at risk. I remind all parents/guardians that the cut-off date for withdrawal from a VET class is 26 February 2016. VET in Schools has program costs that apply to all VET in Schools courses and withdrawals after the cut-off date will still incur these costs.

Gail Bailey
VET Manager

2016 Victorian Public Transport Student Concession Card and Student Pass Application Form
We would like to encourage all students who will need this concession card to travel on public transport to school for 2016 to complete the form and submit it to the general office before the end of the February. It would be greatly appreciated by the office staff if students did this sooner rather than later and not leave it to the last minute.

Change of Personal Details
We are currently working through the process of updating our database with personal details. If you have changed any information please forward the changes to our General Office staff, Florence, Gail or Judy.

Gail, Florence and Judy
General Office

Past Student Performs Bowie
One of our past students, Jules Sheldon, performed at a David Bowie Tribute Concert in Collingwood recently. He offered the following words of encouragement.

"The joy of performing is how it takes you out of your comfort zone and out of reality just for a few minutes. I strongly urge anyone to take a risk and make it into something you can revolve your life around. Go overseas and tour, make records, and just enjoy the hell out of your art."

Matt Simmons
Studio Arts Photography teacher

Music Department - Instrumental Lessons and Ensembles
Instrumental lessons began last week and hopefully all students have now had their first lesson. Timetables are published in Compass and displayed in the music department, so please make sure you look out for your lesson time!

Lessons are on rotation so students do not regularly miss the same class. We also have some spots still available for guitar and piano, so please contact Nick or Lee in the music office for more information.

Our instrumental staff work on the following days:
Monday Fiona (voice) and Greg (guitar)
Tuesday Kein (drums)
Wednesday Anna (voice)
Thursday Owen (guitar and bass)
Friday Anna (voice)

Ainsley, our piano teacher, will be rotating sessions between Monday and Friday for the next couple of weeks.

We also have ensembles beginning next week at lunchtimes and after school. Ensemble times are as follows:

Monday lunchtime: Song Circle with Fiona
Monday after school: Latin/Cuban jazz with Greg
Thursday lunchtime: Dirty blues/rock jam with Owen

Lunchtime concerts will also begin in March, so keep an eye out for dates coming soon!

Nick Taylor
Music Coordinator