

Erina News



Erina High

Issue 10

20th October 2014

Welcome back to the final term of the 2014 school year - how quickly the year has slipped away. I hope staff and students enjoyed the spring break and soaked up the sun we were so lucky to have after the many weeks of rain late last term. What a great day of celebration in the last day of term where we proudly farewelled the year 12 class of 2014. They are well underway with their HSC exams and we have every confidence in them achieving their personal best. Congratulations to all year 12 students on the completion of 13 years of schooling, we wish them all a bright and successful future.



School Events

22 October
Year 9/10 Oz Tag
Year 5 Little Day Out

23 October
Year 8 Scripture

29 October
Year 7/8 Oz Tag
Year 6 Little Day out

30 October
Year 10/11 Scripture

10-14 November
Year 8 ESSA tests



The end of the term also saw the retirement of Mr John McMullen, one of our most valued staff members, having given service to public education for over 37 years. For the many students he has taught over the years they will know what an exceptional teacher he is, one of the most gifted educators I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I was delighted to see the many tributes that flowed on our facebook page farewelling him, one comment I think summed it up beautifully. "Mr McMullen a dead set legend!!" How very true, thank you Mr McMullen for the 11 years of service to Erina High School; you have touched the lives of so many students and inspired and encouraged so many staff you will be sadly missed. All the very best of luck in your retirement!!



Huge congratulations is in order for year 7 and 9 students who achieved the most fantastic NAPLAN results this year, we were so very excited to see the significant improvement in the nationwide literacy numeracy test with writing in year 9 being above state average by 5.2 scaled score points and year 7 by 4.2 . There was a significant increase in the percentage of students in the top bands (8-10) increasing by 8.6% in year 9 reading, 15.1% in writing and 11.2% in numeracy. This is a fabulous result along with improvements in the top 2 bands (8 and 9) in year 7 writing by 3%. Well done students, we are very proud of you and congratulations to our staff for their ongoing commitment to quality teaching and learning, ensuring we provide every opportunity for our students to achieve their personal best. Staff have analysed these results and identified areas that we are keen to focus on in 2015 to strive to be above state average in all aspects of NAPLAN. Mr Chapman has provided a more detailed analysis later in this newsletter.

Year 11 students will commence the HSC course next week and are well prepared to make this transition. Their preliminary reports will be issued in week 5 and I strongly encourage students to actively follow up on the advice provided by their teachers to make the necessary improvements in particular courses.

At the end of last term we were very excited to learn that we are a finalist in the Gosford City Council best school garden award. Congratulations to our wonderful Wednesday weeders who have worked so hard to create our beautiful gardens. This award is testimony to the hard work by Ms Cooper, Mr Lynch, Mr and Mrs McDonnell and Mrs White. Well done Wednesday weeders!!!



I need to remind our senior students who drive to school of their responsibility to follow the road rules. I have received complaints from the local residents that some of our senior students are not driving responsibly; this is a huge concern when we have so many children walking to and from school. I would also prefer to see senior students park on site in the top car park when possible and avoid parking in Woodport Close as there is only parking available on one side of the road with a no parking zone on the other side. Failure to abide by this zoning will result in a hefty fine if caught by the ranger who does regular patrols in the area. The school car park gates are locked from 8.45am until 3.15 Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. On Tuesdays the gates will be locked at 8.45am and opened at 2.30pm. For staff and students on a flexible timetable the gates will be open during break 2 at 1.50pm and closed at 2.30pm Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and re-opened at 3.15pm.

With the warmer weather upon us there should be no excuse for students to be out of uniform with coloured jumpers and the dreaded tights. Please support the school by encouraging your children to wear their uniform proudly. Any preloved uniforms are greatly appreciated for our uniform pool - please drop them off in the administration block. Year advisers and Head Teachers check uniform during roll call and failure to be in uniform will result in a letter being sent home and discipline consequences. Please contact me at school if assistance is required with purchasing school uniform.

Farewell to Mr Pickett who has been successful in his application through merit selection taking up a position at Wadalba Community School as Head Teacher TAS. Mr Pickett has made a significant contribution to Erina High School in his roll as computer coordinator, TAS teacher and year 12 student adviser. He is an outstanding member of staff who will be sadly missed and I know the school community join with me in thanking him for his dedication and commitment to Erina and leading so many systems of improvement in technology and reporting. He will be very sadly missed. Good luck Mr Pickett!!



Karen Nicol
Principal

HSC ASSESSMENT - DEMYSTIFIED

The HSC assessment process is the same at every school in NSW. Each school assess its students and submits to the BOS a ranked list of students and their marks. These marks are not used to calculate your final HSC result. Your school assessment marks are the result of a moderation process using your exam marks. This ensures parity between all schools.

Your exam marks come from the HSC marking process, a highly regulated operation with built in processes for cross checking the validity of marks. Your scripts are not identified by school or name. Your raw marks are sent to UAC for the calculation of the ATAR. However, you do not receive your raw mark unless you apply for them after the marking operation has finished and the results are given to students.

Your exam mark is determined by a process of alignment to the HSC Band descriptors - a team of judges determine the cut of raw mark scores for each band and the mark that separates band 5 from band 6 is adjusted to 90, the mark that separates band 4 from band 5 is adjusted to 80 and so on to the mark that separates band 1 from band 2 which is adjusted to 50. A band 1 result indicates the standards were not met. A mark of 100 remains 100 and a mark of 0 remains a 0.

The cut off marks can change from year to year.

The adjusted HSC 'marks' are now used to moderate your assessment marks. The marks are aggregated and then distributed according to schools ranking and distribution of marks. The top exam mark is given to the first ranked student and the bottom assessment mark is given to the student ranked last.

This is why maintaining your intensity of study and support of and cooperation with your peers is so vital. You should not be competing- you should be helping each other to maximise the exam performance and build the pool of marks to be redistributed. This is why 'The better everybody does, the better everybody does'!

For more information go to <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/yourhsc/>

WHAT IS THE ATAR?

ATAR stands for 'Australian Tertiary Admission Rank'. The ATAR is based on an aggregate of scaled marks in 10 units of ATAR courses comprising:

- the best two units of English
- the best eight units from the remaining units.

No more than two units of Category B courses can be included.

The ATAR is a '**rank**' which lists students from 99.95 to 0 in increments of 0.05 in order of academic achievement.

Students are ranked against their Year 7 cohort. This takes into account students who leave in Year 10 and 11. The highest ATAR a student can achieve is 99.95 which will place the student in the top 0.05% of the state. About 45-50 students in NSW achieve an ATAR of 99.95 each year.

In NSW this rank is determined by the University Admissions Centre (UAC). ATARs are released for eligible students each December on the UAC website. Lower ATARs are published as <30.

For more information refer to the official UAC website.

The calculation of the ATAR is a complex process that begins with scaling the raw HSC marks and ends with ranking students among their Year 7 cohort.

Remember that the HSC marks reported to you are not used in the ATAR calculation. Raw HSC marks are scaled and used in the ATAR calculation.

In some courses more students get higher HSC marks than in other courses. Does this affect the ATAR calculation?

No, because it's your position in your courses that is important when calculating the ATAR.

What is the ATAR used for?

Universities use the ATAR results, sometimes with other selection criteria, to determine which students are eligible to sit for a particular University course.

The number of applicants for an individual course often exceeds the number of places available, so an ATAR cut off rank is necessary.

Only students who sit for the NSW HSC exams in 10 or more units of ATAR courses are eligible for a NSW ATAR.

The specifications of ATAR courses in NSW must include 2 units of English. Other necessary requirements are determined by the UAC such as the number of category A units. Always refer to the official UAC website for up to date information or ask your careers advisor at school.

What is an ATAR Calculator?

An ATAR calculator is a calculator that tries to **estimate** your ATAR result based upon scaled HSC data published by the UAC from previous years.

What is the most accurate ATAR Calculator?

There is **no** 'most accurate' ATAR calculator!

Why?

1. The quality of the data

All ATAR calculators rely upon data that has been scaled, rounded off, condensed then published by the UAC.

The **most accurate ATAR results** are those calculated by the University Admissions Centre (UAC) and released in December.

The UAC uses raw HSC data which is

- unscaled and hasn't been rounded off for each particular subject
- derived from the actual students who sit for the HSC exams. It is a perfect match every year.

2. Student variation

The ATAR varies from year to year depending upon the academic candidature sitting for each HSC subject. Since this varies each year so does the ATAR.

Why do the same HSC marks produce different ATARs from year to year?

Each year a different group of students sits for each HSC subject. That is why the same set of HSC marks produces a different ATAR each year.

Compare the ATAR estimates for 2012 with ATAR estimates from previous years using the same HSC results for identical subjects.

Should a student select subjects that scale well?

NO!

Choose the subjects you are interested in, capable of and that meet your long term goals.

If your best time for the 100 metres is 15.4 seconds you will not achieve a faster time by racing against a more competitive group. In fact the chances are that you'll lose interest and become discouraged. Never choose a subject just because it scales well.

Scaling is designed to give you a mark that reflects your true academic performance no matter what group of students you compete against, ie using the above analogy your time of 15.4 seconds is equivalent of a scaled mark. You are not suddenly going to turn into a sub 10 second runner by competing in the Olympics 100m final.

Many students sadly think they will achieve higher marks by choosing higher scaling subjects.

The students who perform best in the HSC choose subjects they are capable of. As they study they become more motivated because they understand the content. They then achieve greater success in their assessment tasks and tests. This further spurs them on.

Select the subjects you enjoy and that you are capable of and give it your best!

OUTSTANDING NAPLAN RESULTS

NAPLAN examinations are nationwide examinations that test student ability with regards to Literacy and Numeracy. The examinations compare student ability and school groups. They are a "snap shot" in time and give teachers an excellent insight into student needs and what programs need to be developed to assist student development.

This year Erina High School students in Years 7 and 9 have performed extremely well. Students in both years should be proud of their efforts and the mature way they approached the examinations, which lasted for three days.

In Reading there has been a significant improvement made on the previous year, with Erina High School students performing slightly below those of all students within New South Wales. Over 45% of our students scored in the top 3 bands in this area.

In Writing, Year 9 students performed better than the New South Wales state average – this average includes both State and Private school students. This is an achievement to be proud of and one that reflects the effort of the whole school community.

In Spelling, while there was an improvement made on the previous year, Erina High School students performed slightly below the New South Wales State average. Work in this area will be continued from this term to ensure that further improvements are made next year.

In Grammar and Punctuation, Erina High School had over 32% of students in the top 3 bands. This area has seen strong growth and staff will continue their work in this area.

In Numeracy, over 44% of Year 9 students scored in the top 3 bands. This is a huge improvement on previous years and has Erina High School students comparing well to students in other public high schools.

In Data, Erina High School students gained 5 Band 10 results. This is more than double last year and highlights the strong skills students possess in this area.

In Number, there were 8 students that gained a Band 10. This is a 200% improvement since 2012 and students at Erina High School gained more Band 8 and 9 results than the New South Wales State average. This was an outstanding effort.

Year 7 students also performed extremely well in the NAPLAN examinations with special mention to be made regarding Writing where Year 7 students performed better than State average when compared to other public school students. This is a significant improvement on previous years and highlights the strength in writing that these students possess.

Erina High School student top performers in Literacy were –

Year 9:

Bo Buyink, Jaclyn Chambers, Bronte Fenech, India Jacobs, Thandi Nyathi, Erin Rankin, James Rhodes and Marko Zetovic.

These students scored a minimum of 1 Band 10 result and at least 2 Band 9 results.

Year 7:

Blake Dobbs-Finn, Maya Fenech, Jack Maguire, Ky Montgomery, Alisha Power, Monique Sellars and Emily Steer.

The performance Bands are different for Year 7 and these students scored Bands 8 or 9 in the four tested areas.

Erina High School student top performers in Numeracy were –

Year 9:

Shane Annabel, Nathan Boler, Bo Buyink, Joshua Dick, Harrison Kent, Jaida McKenzie, Kimberley Meyer, Johnson Pimkot, James Rhodes, Lachlan Walter and Marko Zetovic.

In this group, 3 students (Shane Annabel, Johnson Pimkot and Marko Zetovic) scored Band 10 in ALL three sections of the Numeracy tests. Congratulations boys!

Year 7:

Nikita Brummitt, Jack Clay, Muhammad Djayadinata, Blake Dobbs-Finn, Jack Maguire, Jai Menser, Adam Miller, Ky Montgomery and Tobias Williams-Smith.

In this group all of the above students scored at least TWO Band 8 results. A wonderful effort.

If you have any questions regarding NAPLAN results, or the results for your child, please contact the school on 43677 353 and ask for Mark Chapman.

ENGLISH NEWS

The English faculty would like to congratulate Year 12 on finishing their HSC examinations in Standard and Advanced English. For those students in Extension and Drama, final exam preparations still need to be made. As we say our goodbyes, Year 12 are reminded that they must return English text books as soon as possible as we will be using these texts again. We wish this wonderful year group all the very best as they venture into their new and exciting lives away from Erina High School.

Year 11 students have started their Year 12 course of study in English. They are currently studying 'Discovery' as an area of study looking at the film The Life of Pi by Ang Lee. This is a brand new topic as the Higher School Certificate prescriptions have changed. Students will sit their first assessment task for this course in week 6 which will be an HSC style comprehension and their second task will be completed in week 10 where they will deliver a speech on a related text. All students have received a copy of their course booklet and all relevant information for both courses is contained within.

Year 11 English Studies students are currently studying the topic 'We are Australians' where they will look at the values and traditions of texts that depicts Australian identity. They will complete a letter and Bill or Rights task which will be due into teachers in week 10.

Finally on the assessment front, English Extension will sit their first assessment in week 8 focused on the topic of 'Navigating the Global'. Students are reminded that if they require assistance for assessment tasks, they are welcome to visit their teachers before school and during breaks but must do so well before assessment due dates.

Students in years 7 – 10 are currently preparing for an essay assessment task based upon the Area of Study concept. Year 7 will be creating a response on the topic of "The Unnatural." Year 8 have examined the film, Footy Legends, and one other text and will write an essay on the idea of Multi-Cultural Australia. Year 9 are preparing to communicate their ideas on "The Aboriginal Experience" after looking at the film The Rabbit Proof Fence. Their response will need to include the ideas found in another text examined in class. Finally, Year 10 will be writing on the concept of "Power." Students have read either Shakespeare's Macbeth or Enright's The Property of the Clan and have examined another text before they complete their task later this week. By this stage ALL students have received their assessment notification and should be aware that they can submit as many drafts as they would like to their teacher for marking before the completion of the task. We wish all students the best of luck.

New English units of work will be starting for all junior years (7 – 10) after the completion of the assessment task, which will mean a busy end to the term with assessment tasks for all years in week 10. Year 7 will be completing a visual representation task based on the play script The Honey Spot by Jack Davis. Year 8 and 9 are also completing Drama units and completing visual representation tasks for the play script Two weeks with the Queen (Year 8) and either Dr Faustus, Romeo and Juliet or The Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty (Year 9). Year 10 will finish the year by completing a unit of work on advertising, a skill essential to their senior study in English.

Years 7 - 9 are reminded that marks carry over from the final assessment this year to their results for Semester One Academic report next year. If students or parents are ever unsure of the assessment tasks scheduled, they can visit our school web site and download English assessment dates as well as assessment task notifications.

In Debating and Public Speaking, Mrs Serrano and Miss Bissett will be leading a group of Year 10 students as they guide and adjudicate students from our Partner Primary Schools in a round robin competition. This competition will take place at Erina High School during week 6 and will see the best students competing for the Erina Learning Community Debating trophy.

In Drama, Year 9 students have been busily finishing their short films. Students were required to write, storyboard, film and edit short films about a subject of their choosing. This task has been a challenging task for the students, however, they have risen to the occasion and we are looking forward to viewing their final products. Year 10 Drama has been studying Asian theatre, in particular Kabuki Theatre. Students have undertaken a research project where they have been studying the conventions of traditional Kabuki theatre. Students will deliver Kabuki presentations to their class at the end of Week Two, Term Four.

Year 11 are excited to begin their HSC. Just like Stage 6 English, the Stage 6 Drama course prescriptions have changed therefore students will be studying new content and play texts. First up, they will be studying Verbatim Theatre, a form of documentary theatre where performances are based on the testimony of people who have a shared experience. Students will study two verbatim plays and have the opportunity to workshop their own verbatim performance. Following this, students will explore Australian Contemporary Theatre and workshop self-devised group performances. Finally, all students must complete an Individual Project or Performance which will be presented to HSC markers during August, 2015.

Recently, Year 9, 10 and 11 English and Drama students travelled to Sydney to view Sydney Theatre Company's rendition of Macbeth. 90 students were amazed by the professional production starring Hugo Weaving. We would like to congratulate all students who attended the excursion; their behaviour on the day was exceptional as they represented Erina High School in the wider community. We would like to thank Mrs Serrano, Miss Bissett, Mrs Braun and Mr Schoffl for supervising the students on the day. We are now in the process of booking Drama excursions for 2015 and have many exciting performances lined up for the students.

Mark Chapman
Head Teacher English

MATHS NEWS

Calculators

Every student needs a scientific calculator with their name on it.

These are a necessary tool in today's society. Everyone has a calculator on their mobile phone that is as powerful as the purchased scientific calculators. However, students are not permitted to use phones in examinations. This is because they are multifunction devices and other functions could be used to give them an unfair advantage.

Students have to learn the features of the calculator and be able to use it efficiently. It does a whole lot more than just computation, including trigonometry, statistics, probability, and the list goes on.

The courses are designed in the knowledge that students will have a calculator. It therefore follows that tests are designed assuming the students have a calculator. Not having a calculator disadvantages the student. Calculators can be purchased for \$16.50 from the front office.

The reason for including this article is that a significant number of students do not have a calculator in class. Just as a work book and pens are the students' responsibility, so is having a calculator.

It is expected that a student turns up to class ready to learn, prepared to have a go at the work presented. A student who comes to class without a book, without a pen and without a calculator is clearly disadvantaged.

At the start of the year students had these things. Could I ask that parents/carers please check that they still have them and are bringing them to class.

Maths Textbooks

Today's textbooks are very expensive and very heavy so we have a policy not to lend students textbooks. The textbooks are supplied for students to use in class.

This causes some issues with student access which we get around to a certain degree by photocopying.

The best access students can get is to get a pdf copy of the text they are using. Students just need to bring in a USB and an electronic copy of the text (used in class) can be provided for them to use at home. This way students (and parents) have access to all the explanation, the examples, the exercises and the answers.

I know it is Term 4 but it is not too late - there are still assessments to come and 10 weeks of learning. Students just need to ask their teacher. It can definitely help with revision and examination preparation.

Mr Wellham

Head Teacher Mathematics

2014 SPORTS PRESENTATION AND COMMUNITY SPORT AWARD NOMINATIONS

The 2014 Erina High School Sports Presentation will be conducted on Friday 5th of December in the MPC from 9:30am. Students who are receiving awards will receive invitations as we draw closer to the end of the term.

In 2013, Erina High School introduced a new sporting award (The Community Sport Award) which was presented at the annual Sports Presentation. The award will return this year. This award aims to give students recognition for the outstanding achievements they have made in sports which may traditionally not be offered at school or for which there is no representative opportunity at school. For example Cycling, Surf Lifesaving, Oz-Tag, Martial Arts etc.

The criteria to be eligible for this award is:

- Represent/Selected in a NSW or higher sporting team
- Compete individually at a State carnival or competition

If you believe you fit this criteria, please collect and submit a nomination form from the PDHPE staffroom and submit it to Mr Keyes or Mr Jones.

Grant Keyes
Sports Organiser/ Year 10 Year Adviser

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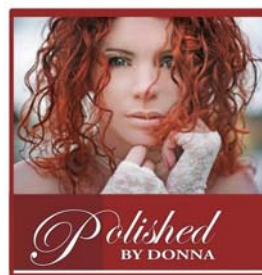
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<http://www.erina-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

Phone: 4367 7353 or 4367 7246
 F: 4365 3086
 E-mail: erina-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

***HSC Art and Textiles Exhibition***

4.00-6.00pm Thursday 6th November

Erina High School Library

Featuring:

HSC Visual Arts Bodies of Work and
 HSC Textiles and Design Projects



Light refreshments will be served

Family and friends of students
 cordially invited

MUSIC NEWS**Battle of the Bands Semi Finals at The Hub, Erina**

Come and support the students in 'Loose Connections' Max Stuart, John Gibson, Will Northcote, Tom Ellem and Olivia Andrews. The band is performing in three semi-finals on Friday the 24th October. Doors open at 6:30 and the show starts at 7:00pm. Entry is \$5 at the door and this is an 'all ages' venue.

Kids Day Out

Kids Day Out is a great day out for younger children and families. Events include 'Octonauts', 'The Lalalopsy Show', 'Big Dog Show', 'Gothans Finest', 'Sciece shows' and much, much more including performances by Erina High School students. For more details on the day go to <http://www.cckdo.org/> For more details, please contact Mrs Gillard.

facebook.com/erinahighschool