WELCOME LETTER

Dear Parents,

I would like to wish you all a warm welcome to the start of the 2016 year and I hope all of you have enjoyed the Christmas holidays. This year will be an exciting year for the College as we celebrate our thirty year anniversary.

With school starting on Thursday 28 January, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the changes that will be taking place this year at Galstaun College.

HSC RESULTS 2015

The College continued to build on its outstanding results from 2014 with over forty per cent of the cohort achieving an ATAR above eighty. In Armenian, Antranik Labadjian topped the state in Armenian with both Aren Kurumlian and Daron Ohanian being ranked second.

Achievements included:
- 68% of students receiving a Band 5 and above for Armenian Continuers.
- 67% of students receiving a Band 5 (state average 52%) and above in Mathematics and 46% of students achieving a band 5 (state average of 26%) and above in Mathematics General 2 unit.
- 58% of students in Business Studies achieving a Band 5 (state average 36%) and above.
- 40% of students in Modern History achieving a Band 5 and above.
- 50% of students in Legal Studies achieving a band 5 (state average 40%) and above.
- 35% of students in PDHPE achieving a band 5 and above.

Congratulations to all students and I would like to take this opportunity to wish the class of 2015 the very best in their future endeavours.

Please note that the College was not included in the school rankings database for the 2015 HSC and we have asked for this issue to be rectified.

ARMENIAN

Armenian classes for Year 1/2 (Stage 1) and Year 3/4 (Stage 2) will now be divided according to proficiency in the Armenian language and not per year group. This split will occur for the Western Armenian classes with Eastern Armenian classes continuing to be taught at a stage level in Primary.
The split in classes will allow for differentiation and ensure that each child’s needs are catered for. Classes have been split according to student performance with classes being reviewed at the end of each term.

The College will evaluate the success of this new program at the end of this year before deciding to implement it with different year groups.

AWARDS

A number of changes have been introduced for 2016 regarding the end of year award ceremony. The changes have been made to provide greater recognition of student achievement and ensure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the College award process.

These changes include:

- Academic Excellence Awards to be provided to students from Year 5 and above not Year 3 and 4 as has previously been the case. To help with the awarding of the Year 5 Academic Excellence and Year 6 Dux, students in those years will be sitting Mid-Year and Yearly Exams.
- Academic Excellence will be awarded to students ranked first, second and third. Please note that students are required to reach a minimum level of achievement to be considered for an academic excellence award regardless of rank. This will also help improve the distribution of merit awards in High School especially for senior years.
- Academic Endeavour will be based on Merit Awards with students having to earn three Principal Awards (thirty Merit Awards) in the one year. This will allow for a clear and transparent system which students can strive for. The same will apply for Armenian, with merit awards from Armenian classes counting towards the Endeavour Awards for the Armenian awards.

I believe the changes help clarify some of the misunderstandings that have existed in the College over previous years. For awards, there is now a clear process based on tangible data which is clear for teachers, students and parents.

ASSESSMENT

The College focus this year is the implementation of a whole school approach to assessment, feedback and reporting. It is essential that assessment challenges students, develops skills and provides appropriate and accurate feedback to students and parents.
For 2016, all assessment from Year 5-12 will be checked by the relevant College curriculum coordinators before being handed to students. Assessments will also be made available on Edumate to ensure that parents have access to and are informed in regards to tasks and due dates. In addition, Year 11 and 12 assessments will be double marked to ensure consistency within the College.

External testing will continue throughout the year to track student development and to allow teachers to gain feedback regarding student needs. Results from the numeracy test in term 4 will be sent home during the second week of school.

From 2016, students in Year 5 and 6 will be sitting mid-year and year-end exams to help reinforce their learning, deliver meaningful data regarding student achievement as well as provide students with exam practice.

**STAFF CHANGES**

There have been a number of teaching changes in Primary for 2016. The classes teachers will be taking in Primary for this year are the following:

- Reception Miss T. Gulumian
- Transition Miss K. Hadju
- Year 1 Mrs K. Donaldson
- Year 2 Mrs R. Goulding
- Year 3 Mrs K. Davies
- Year 4 Mrs G. Gustafson
- Year 5 Mrs L. Sciacca

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr Gregory Chahrozian as the new High School Curriculum Coordinator, Mr Anthony Feeney who will be teaching Design & Technology as well as Miss Mary Anne Ohanessian who will be replacing Mrs Garine Grigorian who has taken maternity leave for the year. Mr Chahrozian is a former member of staff and has a strong understanding of this school and its students. Mr Chahrozian has previously held the position of Curriculum Coordinator at St Mark’s and I am sure the College will benefit from his expertise and knowledge.

The College has also employed Miss Mary Pashayan who is a Psychologist and will be taking on the role of the College Counsellor. Miss Pashayan is an ex graduate and we look forward to welcoming her back to the school.
SHADE SAIL

The Primary Shade Sail will be installed during the Easter holidays. Delays occurred as the College investigated a number of different options including the construction of a permanent structure. Following careful consideration, the College has decided that a Shade Sail would best meet the needs of our students. The College is also looking into having the Shade Sails extended to the Primary and Infants play-equipment area. The College wishes to apologise for the delay in the construction of the Shade Sail and looks forward to the Shade Sail being ready for the start of the second term.

INTERNET & TECHNOLOGY

The College is pleased to announce that it is in the process of installing a Fibre Optic internet service to replace our current ADSL lines. This will dramatically improve our internet speed and reliability as well as provide the College with a sustainable service which meets the demands of the current curriculum and supports engaging and effective teaching and learning. The new internet service should be available in March following the installation of the Fibre Optic cables. We expect to have further announcements regarding technology at the College in the first semester of this year.

The College would also like to thank the P & F for the purchase of additional Tablets for our school students. The Tablets will be made available for teachers to use with their classes when needed.

A reminder that Year 7 students can bring a laptop/tablet to school to support their learning in the classroom.

NUDE FOOD

After a successful trial late last year, we will be making the move to promote package free lunch boxes every day from 2016. Nude Food is simply food that is not wrapped in foil, plastic or commercial packaging.

The benefits of packing a rubbish free lunch box are wide-ranging. Reducing our environmental footprint, teaching students about the need to reduce, re-use and recycle, while also looking after our health. At home it would be more economical when purchasing food items in bulk rather than small individually wrapped packets. Please use the holidays to find the lunch box that suits your child. The right lunch box would hold enough food for your child’s meals at school without the need for packaging, snap lock bags or a variety of small containers. Before purchasing the right lunch box, check if your child can open and close the compartments independently. We hope that in the long run, this will lead to less preparation and washing.
BUS RULES

I have included a breakdown of the bus rules to reinforce the College’s expectations for appropriate student behaviour. A number of parents did contact me during the fourth term and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents for their feedback and input.

Previously, bus buddies had only been offered to students of Reception. From 2016, parents outside of Reception can request a bus buddy by contacting the College administration.

Please note that from this year, school students will be issued with a School Opal card which provides free travel on public transport between home and school. The Opal card will be replacing the school bus pass. Application forms for new students can now be completed via the website www.opal.com.au.

I will be meeting with each bus individually at the start of the school year and reinforcing the bus rules to ensure that every student is aware of my expectations when travelling to and from school.

Please call me on (02) 9998 3200 or via email principal@galstaun.nsw.edu.au if you have any further questions.

Kind Regards,

Edward Demirdjian
Galstaun College Principal
GALSTAUN COLLEGE BUS RULES

The College has put in place a number of rules in order to ensure the safety and comfort of students and passengers. It is every student’s responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers. This includes:

Behaving appropriately

- respect the needs and comfort of other passengers e.g. no use of offensive or racist language, fighting, spitting, placing feet on seats, throwing things in or from the bus, eating or drinking (except water).

- Offering seats to all adults and passengers with disabilities

- Obey reasonable directions from the driver. At no time are students to answer back to the bus driver or members of the public.

- Keep arms, legs and heads inside the bus and remain seated at all times. This is a common complaint for our Infants and it is important that students remain seated to guarantee the safety of all our students. Bags should be placed on the floor at their feet.

- Avoid distracting the driver by persistent noise including calling out to the driver. Students must avoid yelling and calling out in order to not divert the attention of the driver from the road. No offensive language is to be used.

Respecting property

- Protect bus property and ensure that buses are not vandalised. This includes no rubbish to be left on the bus.

- If using electronic devices, students must ensure that devices are only for individual use and contain content/apps/games which are deemed appropriate.

Travel Card

- Show travel card to the driver on boarding and when requested and swipe the card when boarding

Please note that if a student is unable to produce their travel card then the bus driver reserves the right to charge the student the appropriate bus fare. Students need to contact the Administration Office immediately if their bus pass has been lost or stolen. Also, the use of the Opal card is important as it provides data to the Bus companies regarding student numbers on each bus.
Serious Incidents

- Issues involving fighting, bullying and intimidation (other students and the public) are considered serious and will be acted upon accordingly.

**BUS PREFECTS**

Each bus has been allocated two Bus Prefects to take responsibility and ensure the safety of all students. It is the duty and obligation of the Bus Prefect to:

- Make sure that all students are safe and following the College bus rules.
- Report any infringements or problems to the relevant Head of School (Primary/High School) or College Principal.
- Take necessary action in the absence of an adult/College staff member regarding any issues with transport or the well-being of the student.

At no time are Bus Prefects to shout, use inappropriate language, or use force (unless necessary to ensure the well-being of the child) when dealing with students on buses.

Students are encouraged to respect their relevant Bus Prefects and follow their instruction. Bus Prefects have the responsibility to report infringements of bus rules to the College teaching staff. Sanctions will be imposed on students who disregard the College bus rules.

The Bus Prefects for 2016 and the remainder of this year are:

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<tr>
<th>Chatswood</th>
<th>North Ryde</th>
<th>Top Ryde</th>
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<tr>
<td>Karmen Koshkarian</td>
<td>Rita Bassil</td>
<td>Roupen Terzian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moses Panjarian</td>
<td>Noubar Kelleyan</td>
<td>Meledith Zahrabi</td>
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<td>Nicholas Zarigian</td>
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<th>West Ryde</th>
<th>Willoughby</th>
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<tr>
<td>Preni Asadoorian</td>
<td>Aris Arissian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narine Boujekian</td>
<td>Steven Kechichian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Kulassarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larissa Mirzoian</td>
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Parents are encouraged to contact the College if they have any questions or concerns they would like to raise regarding transport.