On Tuesday 17th of May we celebrated **IDAHOT Day** (International day against homophobia and transphobia) with the theme 'Respecting Differences'. With Gordonvale State High School being an Inclusive School this includes our school being respectful of relationships between learners and school community members and part of our role is to support students to truly respect each other and their community members.

The event comprised of a display with information from a variety of services, representation from relevant organisations, and the opportunity for students to watch videos relating to the theme of the day. Coloured feathers were handed out and students wore them proudly in their hair on the day in support of the meaning of the day.

The feature of the event was an activity where students were given the opportunity to write a personal message to support the theme of 'Respecting Differences', on the back of a rainbow card and place it on a pop stick which was then planted at the front of the school. By the end of the day the front of the school was covered in rainbow messages with around 100 students voicing their support.

The theme of this year's NRW is "Our History, Our Story, Our Future". The theme is derived from the State of Reconciliation in Australia report, which asks all Australians to reflect on our national identity, the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights in our nation's story. Reconciliation Week provides all our students with an opportunity to learn and empathise through shared stories and cultures and move forward towards a brighter and more equal future for all Australians.

**Lots to Celebrate**

I would like to open this newsletter edition on a congratulatory note. Well done to our year 9 SUMMIT students; modern history and business students for their exemplary behaviour and hosting of the Humanities Department 'ASPIRATIONS Day' last week. Mrs Honnef organised an incredible array of speakers from all backgrounds and areas of interest to speak to our students on the challenges and adversities faced in achieving their career and life goals. The speakers were absolutely sensational and our students were thoroughly engaged. Our students' in-depth questioning of the speakers highlighted a genuine interest in the message each speaker delivered.

In last week's Rostrum Voice of Youth competition, congratulations must also be conveyed to Charlee Rose and Elisabeth. Both performed admirably and did our school proud. Charlie's success on the evening moves her into the next stage of the competition.

Our day of celebrating diversity – 'Accepting Differences', organised on International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, 17th May, afforded many students the opportunity to write sincere messages of hope and respect for all people, irrespective of their gender, language, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, religion, health or disability, socioeconomic background or geographic location. It was pleasing to see so many students involved.

At Gordonvale State High School our Cultural Perspective team have been busy planning a very 'inclusive' week to coincide with our Nation's Reconciliation Week (NRW). NRW is celebrated every year between the 27th of May and the 3rd of June. These two dates commemorate two very significant events in Australia's history: the 1967 Referendum, which gave the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise them in the national census; and the Mabo Decision, which legally recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a special relationship to the land, paved the way for Native Title, and overturned Terra Nullius.

Our Cultural Perspective Team have planned a whole host of activities, so students and staff can join in the reconciliation effort. Their first planned activity was the sharing of a morning tea, compliments of Mr. Neal Teale's famous coconut damper. Students again wrote real messages of hope for all people.

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**Pat Bailey Competition**

Last Friday, 13 female students represented Gordonvale SHS in the annual Pat Bailey Competition at Jones Park. The girls played in the Open Division and came runners up to Mareeba by just 2 points. The girls played extremely well and had a lot of fun. A special mention to Naysnah Nobol who received player of the Open Division of the day. Well done to all the girls.

**From The Principal**

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**Are your teens off to Schoolies?**

Parents play an important role in preparing their teens for end-of-year celebrations. If your teenager is planning to go to Schoolies, it’s important to discuss their plans.

The Queensland Government’s Safer Schoolies initiative does not promote participation in Schoolies but seeks to enhance the safety and responsible behaviour of school leavers across the state.

Prior to Schoolies each year, the Queensland Government delivers important education sessions to Year 12 students in schools across South East Queensland.

For resources and information about how to prepare and keep your teen safe over Schoolies, follow the Schoolies Info for Parents Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/schooliesinfoforparents
2017 National Mathematics Summer School

Students are encouraged to apply for the National Mathematics Summer School, held from 8 to 21 January 2017. National Mathematics Summer School provides a two-week, in-depth mathematics experience exploring projective geometry, topology, knot theory, chaos theory, cryptography and more.

For information on how to apply, visit: www.nms.edu.au Applications close July 2016.

Premier’s Reading Challenge

The annual Premier’s Reading Challenge is again running in 2016 and I would like to invite all Gordonvale State High students in years 7, 8 and 9 to participate this year. I believe that reading for pleasure is one of the most important habits that students can develop during their school years. As well as being fun, the challenge aims to boost students’ literacy skills by encouraging students to read widely for pleasure and learning, to develop their imagination, and to cultivate a passion for literature.

The annual Premier’s Reading Challenge commenced on Monday 16 May and closes Friday 26 August. This year the Premier has challenged all state and non-state school students from Prep to Year 2 to read or experience 20 books, Years 3 and 4 to read 20 books and Years 5 to 9 to read 15 books. Experiencing books can include shared reading, listening to stories, or reading picture books. The aim for the 2016 challenge is to reach a total of two million books read.

Students wishing to take part in this year’s challenge can register by talking to their English class teacher or to Mrs. Van Rijssen in D block staff room.

Every student who completes the challenge will receive a Certificate of Achievement signed by the Premier and all students receive a Certificate of Participation. It will be my great pleasure to present these certificates during the Premier’s Reading Challenge celebration weeks to be held 7 – 18 November 2016.

For more information about the Premier’s Reading Challenge, please visit: http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/readingchallenge/

You can play a big part in your children’s future by encouraging them to be part of this positive initiative. I look forward to seeing as many of our students as possible embrace the 2016 Premier’s Reading Challenge.

Rostrum Voice of Youth

Over the past two weeks two GSHS students have represented the school in Rostrum Voice of Youth, an annual public speaking competition for schools. We had Elizabeth in Grade 10 in the Junior section and Charlee Rose in Grade 11 represent in the Senior section. The students had to prepare a speech on a chosen topic with Elizabeth focussing on “The Time Has Come to Change Labels” and Charlee with “Catalyst for Change for Rape Culture”. Both students spoke well in the heats with Charlee winning her heat and qualifying for the final which was held on Saturday 28th May. In the final Charlee was also required to deliver an impromptu speech as well as her prepared speech. She was up amongst a difficult field of students from St Augustines, St Stephens, St Marys and St Monicas. Despite a stumble in her prepared speech and tears (on a heartfelt and moving topic) in her impromptu, Charlee was superb. Unfortunately she was beaten in the final, but can still hold her head high as the adjudicators all complimented her on her delivery, passion and willingness to tackle such a challenging and controversial topic. GSHS was the only State High School represented in the final, which is a testament to Charlee’s public speaking ability and how great a school GSHS really is.

Elizabeth had a hard fought heat, speaking eloquently in a moving speech, but was narrowly beaten by the shortest of margins. Both Elizabeth and Charlee are to be congratulated on their performances and as ambassadors for our school. Well done!

Our lovely Year 7 Summit students organised a surprise for Miss Chataway’s birthday. They decorated the classroom with balloons and streamers and presented her with gifts. Heidi had made a beautiful birthday cake for the class’s much loved Maths and Science teacher. Happy Birthday Miss Chataway.

Happy Birthday Miss Chataway

Reconciliation Week

Last Friday, Gordonvale’s Indigenous Leaders launched our annual Reconciliation Week program. All staff were invited to share damper, scones and a cup of tea but not before they provided input into our school’s draft Reconciliation Action Plan.

Our Indigenous Leaders have organised lunch time activities throughout the whole week:

⇒ Monday – Didgeridoo Workshop
⇒ Tuesday – Traditional Games
⇒ Wednesday – 3 on 3 Basketball
⇒ Thursday – Handball Competition
⇒ Friday – Student Morning Tea

This year’s theme is ‘Our History, Our Story, Our Future’ – it celebrates 25 years of formal reconciliation in Australia. It asks all Australians to reflect on our national identity, and the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights in our nation’s story.
They are selling coloured and patterned earphones that are compatible with both apple and android devices in a variety of colours. These cords are 3 metres long and are selling for $8.50. The other product for sale is handballs selling for $6-$7. The designs include glow in the dark, fluro and superhero.

Mrs Matteo’s year 8 business class have created a business called Electric Bounce. They are selling braided charger cords for apple and android devices in a variety of colours. These cords are 3 metres long and are selling for $8.50. The other product for sale is Smencils (smelly pencils). The pens cost $4 each and the pencils cost $2.

Mrs Matteo’s year 7 business class have created a business called A Splash of Music. They are selling Smens (smelly pens) and Smelltionary. The pens cost $10 each with over 50 designs to choose from.

Year 7 & 8 Business - Entrepreneurship

The year 7 and 8 business classes have been completing a unit on Entrepreneurship this term. We have been learning all about characteristics of a successful entrepreneur and how local businesses can be successful. Students have been very excited about the opportunity to run their own business and have been busy coming up with ideas of products to sell. The 3 classes have created business names and have ordered their products and will be begin to sell starting next Tuesday.

These three businesses will open for sale starting on Tuesday the 31st of May. The students are really looking forward to the opportunity to put their knowledge into practise. We appreciate all the support we have already received from staff and students.
All of the spooks, ghouls, and zombies stumbled and ghosted their way to the school hall. Calling them there... the eerie sounds of the Friday 13th Dance!

What a sight it was to see our students dressed in their scary best for this term’s dance. Should Steven Spielberg or M. Night Shyamalan ever decide to film in Cairns, they need only come to Gordonvale High for costume designers and makeup artists. WOW! The level and skill some of the students was both awesome and terrifying.

All students had a great night dancing away to the Time Warp and Backstreet’s Back, with the ever popular ‘Catwalk’ making its long awaited return. Students strutted their stuff, in character of course, down the runway for the evening’s best dressed competition. And what a fierce contest it was with so many fabulous costumes.

Congratulations must go to the Social Captains and the Dance Committee for putting together another great event.

We now turn our attention to the Mag Ball in Term 3 – a Winter Wonderland.

Friday the 13th Dance

Aspirations Day

It was an absolute pleasure to share some of my experiences with the Humanities and Business students at Gordonvale State High School’s Aspirations Day last Thursday which was held at the Cairns Regional Council Civic Reception Rooms. It was a privilege to be able to share the decisions that have shaped my life and to talk about the people and experiences that have led me to this point in my life. My messages to the ‘aspirational’ students of Gordonvale State High were to seek out those who exuded positivity, stay true to their values, have high expectations, accept difference, celebrate diversity and care about the vulnerable and disempowered. Theirs is a generation like no other – they will retire much later, will do more than one degree and work in multiple fields of endeavour. Technology will influence their lives in more ways than they can possibly understand. The anticipation of what this generation can, and will, achieve is high but the axiom noblesse oblige has never been more pertinent – to those whom much is given, much is expected.

School Principal, Mrs Jan Carr opened Aspirations Day with a thought provoking address by informing students that ‘aspirations encompass the engine of progress and change’. This really hit a note with all members of the audience.

I felt incredibly humbled to be sitting on panel of leaders from government, defence, business, law, engineering and the arts that headlined ‘Aspirations Day’. The initiative of the Humanities and Business Faculty at Gordonvale State High School inspired senior students to ‘reach for the skies’.

Queensland Treasurer Curtis Pitt and Queensland Performing Arts Council Chief Executive John Kotzas were among the luminaries who shared their stories. Their anecdotes were heart warming and very engaging.

Another message of the day was to remind students that just because they lived outside major metropolitan area, did not stop them from aspiring to be whatever they choose.

John Kotzas was born and raised in Innisfail and has gone on to be one of the most influential artists in Queensland. Kotzas were among the luminaries who shared their stories. There anecdotes were heart warming and very engaging.

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