Principal’s Report

Last week I attended the Australian Primary Principals’ Associations annual conference, along with 850 of my colleagues. The conference organisers frequently invite guest speakers to present on educational and teaching trends. Often “futurist” speakers talk about where our western and developing world is moving in terms of educational development and change. One particular speaker, Ian Jukes – a Canadian researcher, spoke around the issues of technological change, spoke passionately about how the digital age is changing and morphing our futures – particularly for the children in schools today. Ian spoke about “today’s digital world”, where we are witnessing a digital revolution that is as big as the industrial revolution of the 19th/20th centuries. He spoke of the incredible and turbulent new age in which we are living, and the speed of change. Ian referred to this new digital age as “ the Age of Disruptive Innovation”, an age where every part of society is experiencing a complete upheaval due to the chronic and pervasive nature of change. He spoke particularly about schools which must constantly adapt to these changing conditions in order to prepare our students for the new age of technological innovation. During his talk Ian spoke about the critical 21st-century skills not being addressed by our current educational system; and outlined how schools can effectively engage learners so that they can compete in a future workforce that is changing dramatically with each new decade.

One of the more fascinating aspects to his talk was around just how dramatically the face of the Australian workforce had changed over the course of little more than a century. In 1900, 70% of the Australian workforce were employed in either agriculture (38%) or manual labour (Working) (33%). Only 10% were employed in the “creative” businesses and about 18% in the service industries. Move along to the invention of personal computing and the trend away from manufacturing and agricultural jobs is clear for all to see, with only 0.5% of our workforce involved in agriculture and less and less involved in manufacturing. The trend towards the service and creative industries has increased exponentially as a result. We are at around 25% of jobs in the creative class now. This will grow to around 50% in 2018. The question that we as educators (and parents) need to ask ourselves is: How many of our students are ready to move straight into this space as a result of what we are helping them with in our schools today? Many of the jobs in the service industries today are slowly being replaced by smart software or outsourced to lower cost of manufacture and delivery countries. Ian stated, “Schools are in danger of becoming irrelevant to our students if we don’t make the required changes in our classrooms to cope with this “sea change” going on around us.”

So the message that we need to hear is that the “creative” jobs industry is only going to continue to grow and we are going to need to start preparing our students for this new world. It is interesting to note that there was no ‘app’ industry 5 years ago. Last year it generated $10 billion in revenues. There are now 800,000 jobs in app development currently and continuing to grow at an incredible rate. These are the jobs of the future. Creativity is facilitated by technology – and technology is where the future jobs will be. So we need to give our students the opportunities to develop their creative brain – to explore and grow in a mix of technologies that will assist in this growth. Ian Jukes had a telling quote, “The western model of schooling is providing an outstanding education to our students and preparing them well for 20th Century jobs – jobs that are disappearing and changing at a rapid rate in this 21 Century”.

It all seems so big and frightening, and as Ian Jukes commented – schools are very good at knowing what they need to do to change – it is in the actual implementation of change where we tend to struggle. So where to for Orange East PS? It is our intention to start next year with our 5/6 stage 3 class. We aren’t going to change the world overnight, but we need to start somewhere and soon. After many discussions, we would like to implement a tablet program – where students in Years 5/6 will use tablet technology on a daily basis in the course of their learning. The iPad certainly had a profound impact on how we as a society access services and knowledge and it has virtually replaced laptop/notebook/pc computing. Tablets are portable, easy to access, quick to start
and they have multiple applications. Tablet learning is fun, engaging and CREATIVE. Learning takes on a whole new meaning for kids and adults and the enormous power and knowledge base that is the internet is at the fingertips of the user.

A tablet is a very personal device – and for those of you who own or have children who own and use a tablet, you will know just how personal and important the devices are to the user. It is for this reason that, in my view, it is important that the students own the device, have the opportunity to use the device at home and at school. That their homework is related to the tablet and they can set it up and personalise the device according to their preferences. It is also a technology that is quite expensive and one which the school simply does not have funding reserves to purchase upwards of 75 for the 2015 school year. We do have a proposal however, and one which we will detail in an “expression of interest” to parents over the next couple of weeks. We are looking at the option of assisting parents with students in Years 5/6 with a subsidy, to help cover the initial costs to parents; and, allowing parents to pay 50% up front and then the remainder over the course of the 4 terms. This is a financial commitment that the majority of families would need to commit to if this program were to be viable for the year, and years ahead. This “tablet” program is something that will work if you as the parents of students in 5/6, see this as a valuable shift in the way we approach education. Without your support, this idea will not get off the ground – and neither should it.

We are currently looking at Samsung tablets for their “educational tools” and their ability to run two apps simultaneously. They also have a tablet “pen” which the students can use to “write/draw/annotate” on the screen whilst placing their hand resting on the screen. The Android devices also work better in an educational environment than their apple counterparts, and can be plugged into any computer to download/upload files etc.. The cost of the device is approximately $550 (Educational pricing is much cheaper than retail) with a cover. The school is looking at a possible $100 subsidy, which would mean an upfront commitment of $225 and then 4 payments of approximately $55 over the four terms. I realise that there are families who have purchased different tablets and platforms to deal with. If this program is going to work well, there needs to be a common tablet used by all students.

One of the reasons that I broach this topic today, is that I realise that we are in the lead up to Christmas and that monies will be spent on a variety of technologies and Christmas gifts. If we are to travel down this educational road it might be wise to invest in a gift of technology for your child that they will use in class in 2015. I will send out the expression of interest shortly. I realise that we are asking you to consider making a significant financial investment in tablet technology for your child, and during those family discussions I encourage you to think about where we as a society will be in 10 years, and what will the workforce look like when your child seeks employment. What are the skills your child will need to have when they enter tertiary studies and the work environment. Change isn’t coming – it is already here. I look forward to your response and we will move forward only with this communities blessing and support.

This Thursday the Year 6 students will be hosting an Ice-Cream fundraising activity to raise money for the Year 6 farewell gift to the school. The Year 6 students will be selling an ice-cream cone with a scoop of ice-cream with some fun toppings at lunch time (After lunch is eaten). Ice-Creams will be $2.00. A great amount of fun will be had and the Year 6 are keen to raise money to assist the school to purchase some fixed soccer/footy goal posts. I encourage all the kids to participate and enjoy a summery treat on what promises to be a very warm day.

PBL this week will has been all about safely ‘exiting the school’ with an emphasis on wearing the school uniform. This lesson has been scheduled to remind students of the orderly and safe way we are meant to leave at the end of each day.

Steve Wilkinson
Principal

School News
Assembly ~ There will be a full school assembly this Friday 31st October commencing at 12.40pm.

Cultural Day/Pizza Day ~ this Wed, tomorrow, we will be celebrating Cultural Day. Children are encouraged to wear the colours of the country flag that has been chosen by their class teacher. Orders for pizza have now closed.
Year 6 TCRTHS Orientation Day ~ will be held this Wed 29th October from 9.00am to 2.30pm at Canobolas High School.

Bathurst Sheep & Cattle Drome Stage 1 Excursion ~ reminder that payment is due by Wednesday 5th November.

Learn to Swim ~ is FULL. Those parents/carers who have returned a note but not paid please pay by Wed 5th Nov or your place may be given to those on our waiting list.

Helpers Needed ~ for Stage 1 sport on Fridays at 10.10am to 11.10am to help run our sports skills program. Please see Peter Cook ASAP.

Assembly Awards ~ congratulations to the following students who received a sticker on their award sheet ~ Nevaeh Graham, Ben Gold, Jessica Field, Amy Hampton, Lachlan Waters, Emilee Forrest-Smith, Jasmine Doyle, Isobella Turnbull, Lachlan Turnbull, Willow Fisher, Jade Harding, Lucas Carr, Macey Paul. Congratulations also to Koben Diprose who received his first sticker and Liam Rawsthorne for completing his 100 certificate.

Principal Awards ~ congratulations to Felicity Hack, Tyrone Yates, Cameron Rogers and Leyton Frecklington who all received a Principals Award.

Entry to Gov Selective High Schools Yr 7 2016 ~ Applications for placement in Yr 7 at a selective high school in 2016 will be open to parents of students in Yr 5 until 17th November 2014. It is very important to note that late applications will not be accepted. All students wanting to go to a selective high school will have to take the Selective High School Placement Test on the morning of Thursday 12th March 2015. There are 17 fully selective high schools, 25 partially, 4 selective agricultural and 1 virtual offering selective placements in Yr 7 NSW. A map showing where the selective high schools are available at [www.schools.nsw.det.au/schoolfind/types/shs](http://www.schools.nsw.det.au/schoolfind/types/shs). For more information please call 1300 880 367 or go to ssu@det.nsw.edu.au

Community News

Orange Regional Conservatorium ~ is having an open day on 8th November 10am to 3pm. For more information go to [www.orangecon.org.au](http://www.orangecon.org.au) or call 6361 7974

Manildra Public School Fete ~ Saturday 8th November 10am to 3pm show rides, face painting and lots of fun activities. For more information call 6364 5055

Sportmans Warehouse ~ introducing their newest edition Clarks school shoes. 20% of all clarks school shoes until 8th Feb 2015.

Aussie Hoops Basketball ~ introduces children to basketball. Runs for 7 week commencing Wed 5th Nov 4.30 -5.30pm Ages 5-10 yrs for more information please call 0428011820 or email rocktherim@hotmail.com

Dates to Remember

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<td>Year 6 Orientation Day TCRHS</td>
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<td>Thu 30th Oct</td>
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<td>Fri 14th Nov</td>
<td>K-2 Bathurst Sheep &amp; Cattedrome</td>
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