



# Lyrebird

totem of the Tharawal people

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES ACHIEVING SUCCESS

| TERM 4 | WEEK 9 | 2021

## Term 4 – Final Newsletter for 2021

### Principal's Message

Times of adversity are never desirable and over the last two years we have had our fair share. You have experienced it so there is no need to list it here. It is also during these time that the strength and weakness of organisations and people are most evident. I have seen our wider community band together to help and support each other even if it was just to say 'we are here if you need us'. That is the strength of a community and Wollondilly seems to have this in excess.

We have just moved out of "Learning From Home", something that has not been seen since the great wars of the 20 century and something I hope we will never have to experience again. The fallout from the impact of Covid continues and we continue to react to updates and changes as they are provided. Some last minutes ones include,

- We will be conducting a Year 12 Virtual Graduation on Thursday 9th December. As no parents are allowed on school site, we will be running this as a live stream.
- We will be conducting Year 7-11 end of year Achievement Award Ceremony on Monday 13th December. We will be running a separate celebration event for each year group. As no parents are allowed on school site, we are live streaming the event. Only the people involved in the presentation will be filmed. If you would like your child not to be videoed, please let the school know.
- Orientation day for year 7, 2022. Given the size of our new premises, we can now hold this event on the same day whereas in the past we have had to break the day into three parts. Each primary school is being contacted and provided with details that can be shared with parents. Students will be experiencing, dance, gym, sport, science and cooking as well as getting to know new friends in a new school. The initial date determined falls on the day that the NSW Teachers Federation has determined that Industrial action will be taken, accordingly we are renegotiating with primary schools an alternative date to ensure we have as many year 6 students as possible. At this stage the event will now take place a week later on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

On a separate matter, the school build is now complete. Builders will continue to come on site to rectify and fix, however, the school will take possession of the whole site. The hall is be renovated at school expense. We are hoping to have all works completed around mid-way through next year. Although we will have control of the new oval and play spaces, we will not be opening the site until 2022. This will give the freshly laid turf, time to bed.

### Uniform stock

Our existing Uniform Supplier's contract ran out at the end of November. Accordingly, we ran a new tender process and a company called Yeronga has been successful in picking up that contract. Unfortunately it could not have been at a worse time. Just prior to Christmas shutdowns, trouble with Asian suppliers and international transport issues. The outgoing and incoming companies have just completed a stock take rollover and we are determining what remains and what we need to make. I am confident that we will not have enough stock to start the year.

I have asked the new suppliers to produce 300 blue polo shirts as a priority and they are working on manufacturing that. This plus the existing stock is what we will open the year with. If a product line or size is not available for your child, it will be ok for them to wear generic products of the same colour. Although we

like to look our best at the start of a new year our students may have to wear generic back products until they are available.

### Staffing

We are just finalizing the last of filling teacher vacancy positions. I anticipate there will be eight changes. You will be introduced to our new staff at the beginning of next year however teachers tend to pick up new positions without notice. An example is Mr. Andrew Tann. After many years of dedicated service, he has picked up another position elsewhere. We thank him for his diligence and professionalism and wish him well. We will fill his position early 2022.

### Hall Upgrade

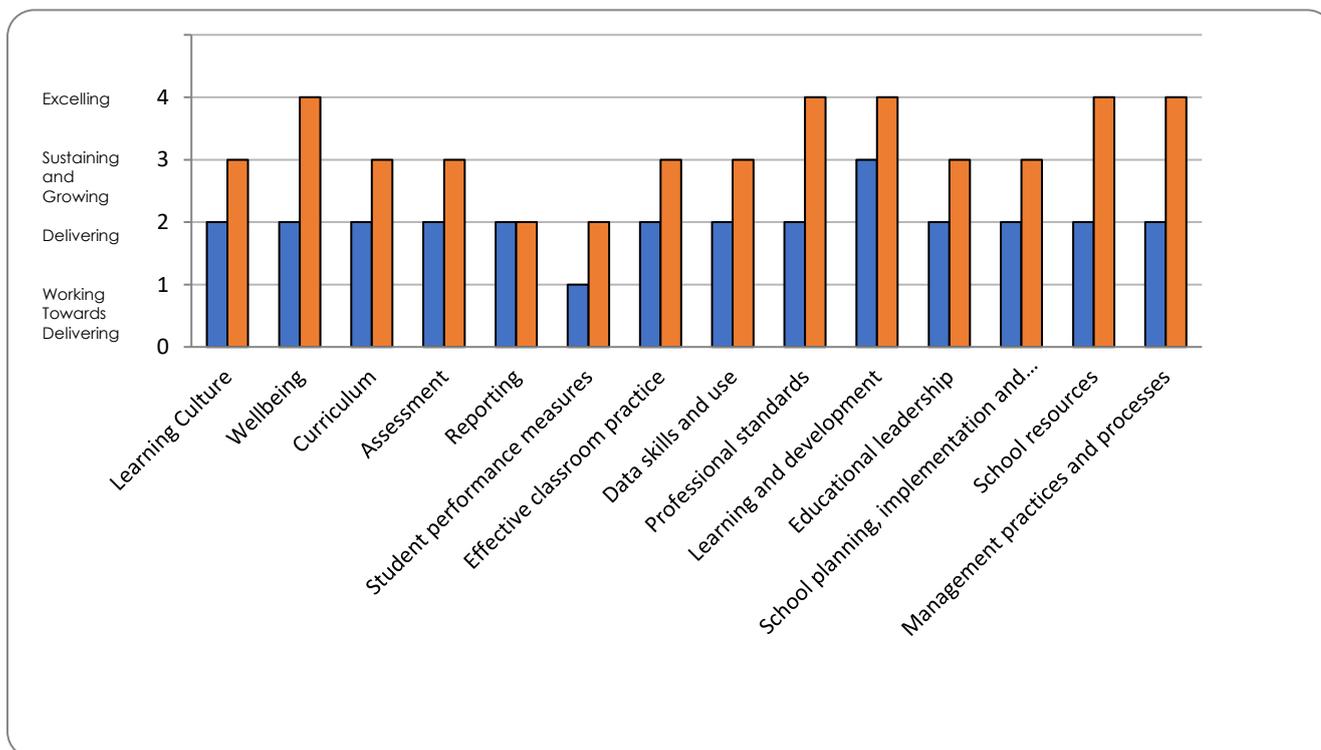
The process is underway and approved, however the build and Covid have interrupted the work we hoped to have completed by now. The floor is completed, and the last three roof sides will be done over the Christmas break so that all walls are now white. I anticipate the internal works will commence around March. You may remember that this is a school funded project. The delay has meant a significant increases in cost which is discussed at the last P&C of the year. It is hoped that the work will be completed early semester 2 and we can begin to operate many community events.

### School Performance and Planning

Every year schools are asked to reflect upon their progress. They are measured against 14 different standards in Learning, Teaching and Leadership. Every 4 years an external team of principal's reviews school progress and makes comment against the current year's determination. For us at Picton this "External Validation" process took place in term 3 of this year. From this reflection and validation process our school can modify it directions to better work towards further improvement. Below is a graph representation of our growth over the last two years.

Blue represents where we were two years ago. Orange where we are today. The highest level is Excelling.

Our staff have worked together diligently to make these improvements. We will not have to modify our current plans as we had already identified where we need to do more, to get our students to achieve higher results and improved processes. This work has already commenced, and I hope you will see the outcomes next year.



## **End of Service at Picton High School**

My time as relieving principal at Picton High School will come to an end this year. I was initially asked to undertake the position for a few weeks during a difficult time and I was happy to stay until now to complete the new site and work with you in educating your children. I set myself some long-term plans and almost all have been met however the work of a school never ends as we continue to do more to improve educational outcomes.

It has been my greatest pleasure to work with this staff to help "grow" your children. They are full of energy and ideas and continue to impress me in their innovative practice and commitment to improving educational outcomes.

Finally let me say thankyou to you, the parents, carers and the community for letting me work with your school and its students. It has been an honour and privilege.

Have a safe and happy Christmas break



Mr. Warren Parkes  
Principal