



## TERM DATES

### Term 2

**08/06/2026**

Kings Birthday Public Holiday

**10/06/2026**

Yr 5/6 Merbein District Sports  
School Council (6pm)

**15/06/2026 – 16/06/2026**

Parents as Partners  
conference  
2.15pm – 5pm

**26/06/2026**

End of Term – Early Dismissal  
1.30pm

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## NEWSLETTER: Term 2 – Fifth Edition

### ACTING PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

*With the recent passing of the inspirational and selfless, Niel Daniher, we are almost forced into our own self-reflection. Niel lived such a purposeful life – both through playing and coaching football and in his personal and very public campaign against MND. A famous quote often used by Niel was, 'when all is said and done, more is said than done'. At The Lake Primary School, we constantly strive for purposeful behaviours to develop the capabilities of every student, every day.*

At the beginning of the year, when Leadership were discussing changes to how we communicated, it was decided that the newsletter would speak mainly to Department policies, key initiatives and educational trends. Therefore, I thought the fifth edition of the newsletter would be an opportunity to share some insights and reflections from the very worthwhile Statewide Principal Conference that Mrs. Leanne Hunt and I had the privilege to attend last week.

#### **2026 Government Schools Statewide Principals Conference**

The 2-day conference was a gathering of 2800 school leaders in Melbourne at the Exhibition & Convention Centre. We were treated to hear from a variety of national and international keynote speakers along with key parliamentary figures, including the Minister for Education, Mr. Ben Carroll MP. Below is a brief overview and some reflections and takeaways from the 2-day event.

#### **Keynote No.1**

David Howes, Deputy Secretary, opened the conference and spoke mainly to the industrial action campaign and the recent in-principle agreement. He expressed his appreciation for the way school leaders and school communities supported the campaign and was, overall,

pleased with the proposed improved conditions. Mr. Howes presented the overwhelmingly positive NAPLAN data, which further emphasised Victoria as the 'Education State'.

Lisa Robinson, Principal of Laverton College, gave a very honest insight into the complexities of leading a largely diverse and intercultural Prep-12 school. Mrs. Robinson shared ways of bringing the complexities of a school community together and encouraged us all to bring the joy and sparkle. She stressed the importance of letting go of some things, empowering colleagues, building trust and empathy. Mrs. Robinson left us with the question – How do we DQ leadership?

Our Sunraysia neighbours, Irymple Primary School, hosted a workshop titled 'Strategic & Whole-School Approach to Improving AtoSS'. Impressively, they have a very strong culture of student voice and agency and they are very transparent with the data that they gather. One strategy that we could employ at The Lake Primary School to increase voice and agency is to engage our students in regular 'Pulse Checks'. This strategy has had a positive impact on inclusivity and sense of belonging data for other schools.

## **Keynote No.2**

Dr. Carl Hendrick, a London-based educator, spoke about the 'Science of Learning' and stressed the importance of establishing a shared understanding of how students learn. He spoke about learning being recursive (it loops back on itself), not linear, and he expressed that forgetting and retrieval is where learning is converted to long-term memory. Dr. Hendrick explained that good leaders create clarity before accountability. This was my favourite part of the conference.

We heard from Tony Bates, Department Secretary, which was followed by a very informative panel conversation, facilitated by Dr. Marcia Devlin, on Artificial Intelligence. The audience was encouraged to move AI conversations away from purely technological conversations to humanistic conversations around wellbeing, student development and leadership. Interestingly, one of many recent studies highlighted that 60% of Secondary students were anxious that AI was going to take away their future job.

The third workshop that Mrs. Hunt and I attended was titled, 'Trauma Sensitive Practice in Education'. This, also, was a fascinating presentation based on understanding and responding to dysregulation in the classroom. It was explained that complex trauma is trauma based in relationships and the wound is often the location for healing. When a child is dysregulated it is important regulate first, relate second and reason third. This process fits nicely with our Real Schools practices of 'connection before correction'. We know that, through our recent learnings of 'VTLM 2.0 – Elements of Learning', that kids who have experienced trauma will likely require additional and targeted support to learn.

## **Keynote No.3**

Our final presenter was Dr. Simon Breakspear, an internationally recognised leader in educational reform, who spoke about staying the course and moving from 'great' to 'excellent'. He spoke of the importance of playing the long game from a system level. Simon reminded us that humans are moved by narrative and encouraged us to not let school teams run out of a future narrative. I've heard Dr. Simon Breakspear speak on multiple occasions and regularly engage with his work – this 40-minute session was particularly meaningful.

**RESILIENCE**

**LEARNING**

**SUCCESS**

**RESPECT**

**TOLERANCE**

What a wonderful time all students and adults have been having in Melbourne. The Urban Camp has provided everyone with many unforgettable shared experiences. Some highlights so far have included Scienceworks, Planetarium, MCG tour, Australian Sporting Musuem, Flinders Street Station and karaoke. Today, students are looking forward to visiting the Old Melbourne Gaol, ACMI and a night walk at the Melbourne Zoo. If our return travels run to schedule, we will be returning to school on Friday between 4.00-4.30pm.



Ms Margot is clearly having a wonderful time with the kids (LOL – too funny not to share)



Kind Regards,