WELCOME
It is with immense pleasure that I return to Armidale High School as relieving Principal. I’m delighted to offer a warm welcome to all those students and families who are new to the school this year and I trust that this is the beginning of a happy association with the Armidale High School community. Year 7 began the year with a flourish and I continue to be impressed by their enthusiasm, good manners and impressive appearance. I hope to see many of our Year 7 parents at the welcome barbecue next Tuesday, 17 February.

Staffing
We also welcome new staff this year. Jo Scotchmer is joining us in HSIE and Nicollete Burr will be replacing Cathy Archer in music for 12 months while Cathy takes up a position with the Educational Services team. Ingrid Evans will be joining the CAPA team, teaching Visual Arts. Kris Croft will continue to act as Deputy Principal and Michael Lord will relieve as Head Teacher, Teaching and Learning. Late last year Amanda Garvey was appointed Head Teacher Science and Deborah Rothschild Head Teacher Special Education.

School planning
The staff of Armidale High School are committed to improving the life opportunities of each and every student. We are working in collaboration to develop a shared vision for Armidale High School which will then be reflected in a dynamic school plan with three clear strategic directions. We will regularly seek input and the views of our parents and carers to help us achieve our goals. There is a great deal of change occurring in the educational sector with some very significant key reforms. In subsequent newsletters I will share some of these initiatives with you. This is arguably the most radical and exciting period that Public Education has experienced in NSW, with a relentless focus on enhancing student outcomes through quality teaching.

Young Citizen of the Year
A big congratulations to our Vice Captain, Melanie Brash, on winning the Armidale Dumaresq Councils Australia Day Young Citizen of the Year Award. This award highlights the dedication that Mel displays to both Armidale High School and the wider community.

2014 HSC results
The 2014 HSC cohort achieved some very solid results and on behalf of the school community I offer them my congratulations on their hard work and dedication. Domenico Favotto achieved 1st place in NSW in Information and Digital Technology and received his prestigious award from the Minister for Education. I would also like to congratulate the following students:
Liam Knott – Band 6 in Biology and Chemistry (ATAR 93.5)
Elana Leske – Band 6 in Music 2 and Music Extension
Emily Curtis – Band 6 in Biology (ATAR 92.2)
Chelsea Erieau – Band 6 in English Extension 2
Katie Rekunow – Band 6 in English Extension 2
Bridie Simpson – Band 6 in Drama
Georgia Smith – Band 6 in Music 1

Domenico receiving his award from the Minister

Band 6 Assembly
At the recent Band 6 assembly a number of our 2014 HSC students (pictured below) returned to the school to share with Year 11 and 12 students their perspectives on achieving a Band 6 result. We were also fortunate enough to have two guest speakers join us at the assembly; Member for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall, who spoke to the seniors about the importance of recognising who they want to be rather than what they want to be, and ex-student Rose Ahlefeldt, who has recently been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study at Montana State University. Rose spoke about her experiences of study both at school and at a tertiary level. Rose is a Post-Doctoral fellow in the Laser Physics Centre at ANU and completed her HSC at Armidale High in 2003. Later in the morning Rose joined the senior physics class and spoke in more detail about her work in the field of science. It is wonderful to welcome guests into our school and we thank Rose and Adam for their time and insight.

Uniform and presentation
It is expected that students will present themselves well at all times, wear the school uniform with pride and in an acceptable manner. It is important for safety reasons that students have the correct footwear i.e. covered black leather shoes. Parents and carers who may need assistance to obtain the correct items of uniform should approach the school.

Communication
A good communication system with parents is of paramount importance and to enhance this we have implemented some innovative ways to increase our communication. This includes the free ‘Skool Bag’ app that can be downloaded on smart phones, e Newsletters, the AHS Facebook page; Twitter (@ArmidaleHS) and we are currently implementing a SMS attendance notification system. For these systems to operate effectively it is crucial that we have your correct information. If you have changed your address or phone number we would appreciate your new details being relayed to the office staff. If you would like to personally meet with myself or one of the staff, I would encourage you to make contact with the office staff and schedule an appointment.

Carolyn Lupton
Principal (relieving)
Ag Excursion

Last Thursday 5th February, the Year 10 Agriculture class took part in a farm tour (part one) of the Uralla/Gostwyck district. Students visited the Greenhill Orchard owned by Warren and Bronwyn Yeoman, the Sunhill Dairy Goat farm just out of Uralla owned by Richard and Corinne Annetts and Gostwyck Station to view technograzing management of pastures with Cal Schaeffer.

Students learnt all about the various enterprises conducted on each farm, sustainability and methods of marketing products to the wider community. A big highlight was feeding the kids (goat kids that is!!) at the dairy and cheese tasting. This week we will be venturing north to Guyra to visit a trout/yabby farm, an open range chicken layer farm and a mixed enterprise potato/sheep/cattle farm.

I would like to publicly acknowledge the property owners who gave their time and expertise to our extraordinarily well behaved students (well done boys, and Kayla :-) )

Thanks also to Theo Groen for driving the school bus.
Rebecca Smith
Agriculture Teacher

Year 10 Agriculture Class

Feeding the kids

Feeding the bigger kids

Technograzing

Yeoman’s Orchard

Cheese tasting and soap making
**Year 12 Outdoor Recreation**

Year 12 Outdoor Recreation class travelled to Cathedral Rocks National Park recently and completed the Cathedral Rocks Trail. The students were working towards units of competency in the areas of Bushwalking and Navigation. The class will soon undertake a 4 day trek in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks to complete these units.

**Home Economics Report**

Home Economics has started another busy year with new textiles projects and heaps of cooking. Year 12 Textiles and Design students have begun work on their Major Projects.

Caitlin Sillar and Nadya Kemp, Year 12

**Year 7** have been busy developing their machine skills and will be making a pair of pyjama shorts this term.

**Year 8** Technology have been enjoying making smoothie, Year 9 Food Technology have started with Food Selection and Health and are currently cooking nachos. Mexican and Italian foods have been on the menu for 7/8 Cultural Cooking.
Attendance at AHS 2015

Attendance is a very important part of a student’s school life. Students who regularly attend school are more likely to have a solid grasp on the work they do in every subject. They are able to monitor and prepare better for major assessment tasks and they can successfully take part in extra-curricular activities such as choir, sport and debating without worrying about missing a small amount of class time.

A student’s attendance should remain well above 85%. The school monitors the attendance rate for all students and those that fall below this level need to explain clearly why they are unable to attend school regularly. Although this level of attendance is not possible for everyone due to events that occur at home or in the community, students can still work on improving their attendance. Students should be aware that their attendance will affect the rate for their year group and the whole school by the end of the year.

Part of the attendance guidelines set out by the Department of Education and Communities states that:

“Regular attendance and engagement in educational programs is strongly linked to the likelihood of students experiencing success in learning. Students who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life.”

At Armidale High we are also concerned that some students regularly attend school late. Getting to school 30 minutes late every day means that over the course of one term you have missed 30 full periods of work (50 minute periods). This equates to one full week of subjects and it is quite difficult to catch up on this amount of work. Students should ensure they receive adequate sleep throughout the school week and plan to be at school well before the roll call bell at 8.53am.

We trust that students actively engage themselves in learning and enjoy the experiences on offer in every subject area. The teachers work hard to provide stimulating lessons that teach students valuable knowledge and skills, particularly in the area of technology. Students are also able to represent the school proudly in a variety of activities such as science and engineering, music, drama and sport. They can also participate in some of these activities during recess and lunch which enhances the benefit of being at school every day.

Parents and guardian’s play an essential role in working with their children and the school to promote the importance of regular attendance. For more information on attendance at AHS you can ring the school to discuss your child’s attendance with the teaching staff.

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NSW SCHOOL VACCINATION PROGRAM

WHAT VACCINE SHOULD MY CHILD RECEIVE

YEAR 7

dTPa vaccine includes protection against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough and is your child’s first adolescent booster. This dose is in addition to the dTPa vaccines given during childhood.

HPV vaccine is only offered in year 7

Varicella vaccine (against chickenpox) is for children who have not been previously vaccinated or had the disease. However, 2 doses of varicella vaccine can be safely administered.

YEAR 11-12 students

a single dose of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) will be offered – please check how many doses of MMR vaccine (called MMRIi or Priorix) your child has received by checking their baby vaccination book (blue book) or contacting Medicare on 1800 653 800. DO NOT COMPLETE THE CONSENT FORM if they have evidence of two previous doses.

What happens if a student misses a dose – they will be caught up at the next clinic – you do not need to do anything.

A RECORD OF VACCINATION CARD - will be provided to each student vaccinated at each clinic. Parents/guardians should ensure that this record is kept for future reference. A request for a duplicate record of vaccination is required in writing and will incur a fee of $33.00.

TO ALL PARENTS RE THE OAK LEAF

We are aiming to phase out paper copies of the Oak Leaf by Term 2. If you have not sent in your email address to the school, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you.
AHS P&C REPORT
Welcome, back and to, our school and welcome back to Carolyn Lupton. I would like to take a moment to introduce you to your P&C team; Ms Fiona Xeros - President, Leigh McLennan - Vice President, Roger Horton - Secretary and Geoff Thorne - Treasurer. AHS P&C is an active, inclusive and innovative group, that strives to be a positive, helpful influence in the school. To this end we run a variety of activities throughout the year. Our major fundraiser is the Antique Fair coming up on the 20th, 21st and 22nd February in the AHS auditorium. Parents, teachers and students volunteer their time, muscle, cooking and shopping skills to this fabulous event. Please call the school if you would like to be involved this year, we have jobs to suit everyone.

In 2014 P&C parents supported the planting of a native garden by buying trees and shrubs, and doing the hard work. We are grateful to the Westthorpe family and Armidale Tree Group for their invaluable contribution to this project. Last year we trialled a Girls Expo where local businesses came to the auditorium with a stunning array of interesting ‘girlie’ things from candles to cookers. We all had a fabulous 3 hours and Mr Horton won the major prize!

We are excited about 2015 and encourage all our parents and friends to get involved in whatever capacity you can. I know you were dedicated to P&C in the primary school years, however; we may in fact need you more now.

P&C meets every 3rd Tuesday at the Bowling Club at 7pm, we will be there Tuesday the 17th February. Come along and check us out!

Fiona Xeros, P&C President

Basketball is Back!!!

2015 nomination forms for teams or individuals are due on Saturday 7th Feb and are available from Intersport or Sportspower.

As it is a new season and many students have graduated to and from high school, we have to reorganize our junior basketball teams for 2015. It doesn’t matter if you are not very good at it, it only matters if you are having fun and getting fit.

Don’t know anyone else who wants to play??? No worries! To help you get started in a new team, there will be a sign up session on Tuesday 3rd straight after school (3.30 to 4.30) and again on Saturday 7th (4pm – 5pm) Come down to the stadium and sign up to go into a team. We will put you with as many friends as possible or find you new ones.

Games are on a Tuesday evening, anytime from 4.20 onwards with grades being Yrs 7/8 or Yrs 9/10. Cost is $6 per week or $40 per team for game fees, and registration is $70 for the 12 months. Players in yrs 11 & 12 will need to join the Men’s and Women’s grades.

If you are interested in improving your basketball, join our Armidale Lions Representative Squad which will be training from 10am - 12noon on Sunday 1st or 8th at The Den; we are looking for players turning 12-17 in 2015.

If you would like to participate in this fabulous game or simply need more information, please contact Judy Monaghan on 67727771 or 0417622859, or by email at armball@bigpond.com
Need help managing stress or anxiety?
If your child or teen has difficulties with anxiety or just seems to have too many worries, we would like to introduce you to BRAVE Self-Help - an interactive, online program for the prevention and treatment of childhood and adolescent anxiety. It was developed by a group of researchers from the University of Queensland and now, with the support of beyondblue, this program is now freely available to all young people aged 8-17 years old who are living in Australia. BRAVE Self-Help provides strategies for children and teenagers to better cope with their worries. There are 4 programs available, one for children aged 8-12 years, one for teenagers aged 12-17 years and one for parents of children at these ages respectively. The program can be accessed as often as you like, from the comfort of your own home. For more information, or to register for the program, please visit www.brave4you.psy.uq.edu.au.

Armidale High Swimming Carnival 2015
The AHS twilight swimming carnival will be held at the Monckton Aquatic Centre, Dumaresq St, Armidale on Thursday 19th February. The carnival will commence at approximately 3.30pm and it is anticipated that it will conclude between 7.30 and 8.00pm. Students will attend regular classes in the morning and will then be transported to the pool by Edwards Coaches at a cost of $2 for the bus (payable on the day) and $4 pool entry. Students may wish to wear their house colours to school or bring a change of clothes. A roll call will be conducted on arrival at the pool before events commence. Friday 20th February will be a non-pupil day at school.

Teaching someone to drive can be a happy experience.
You can learn all the simple steps on how to teach a learner driver at a FREE two hour workshop. The next workshop in your area will be held:

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<th>TIME &amp; DATE</th>
<th>VENUE</th>
<th>BOOK NOW ON</th>
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<td>Thursday 19th February 8:30pm – 10:30pm</td>
<td>Uluru Central School+ Library</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stottls.com.au/mns">www.stottls.com.au/mns</a> Ph: (08) 6650 1369 Freetel 1300 359 968</td>
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Helping learner drivers become safe drivers

"The SportUNE Twilight Football (Soccer) Term 1 competition will commence on Tuesday 17th February 2015 and is open to U10’s, U12’s, U14’s, U16’s (Juniors) and Opens, Mixed and Women’s (Seniors) teams. The competition will be six weeks and cost $240.00 per junior team and $300.00 per senior team."
ANY DONATIONS OF CAKES OR BISCUITS FOR THE CANTEEN AT THE ANTIQUE FAIR WOULD BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED AT THE TOP OFFICE ON FRIDAY 20TH FEBRUARY.

ARMIDALE ALLIGATORS SWIMMING CLUB

The Armidale Alligators is a NSW Swimming affiliated club which operates out of The Armidale School (TAS) Sports Centre to provide all year round swimming for its members.

Club nights are run every Friday night during summer (Terms 1 & 4) and every second Friday night during Winter (Terms 2 & 3), with the exception of school holidays.

Racing is against swimmers of similar ability, not age, with the focus on beating your own best time. Swimmers are encouraged to try and “DO A PB” (personal best)! New swimmers and their families are always welcome. If you would like further information please email: armidalealligators@gmail.com or visit our website: www.armidalealligators.swimming.org.au or contact Lisa Russell, Club Registrar on 0408 989 994. The first two weeks is free! Come and try - it is fun as well as improving your racing skills.