



In Focus



THE RIVERS
SECONDARY COLLEGE

The heart of secondary education for Lismore

Term 1
2024

A Message from the Executive Principal



Coming to the end of Term One, I wish to express my gratitude for the warm welcome I have received from our college and the broader community in my role as the relieving Executive Principal. Our Secondary College Leadership Group has been diligently working on fostering collaborative practice that benefit our college, while also recognising and addressing the unique needs and strengths of our three campuses. Additionally, we have engaged in positive interactions with the Principals of our Primary School Partners to enhance our processes around Year 6-7 transition and to develop a common understanding of and strengthen our offerings for High Potential and Gifted Students.

The local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group has shown tremendous support for both myself and the college. Their welcoming and supportive contributions to all our campuses ensures that every student experiences the enriching aspects of being a part of the worlds oldest continuous culture, which truly makes a difference to our college community.

Term one of 2024 has been a positive and enriching one for our students and staff. The multitude of opportunities for our students to engage with learning through sports, culture and academics lays strong foundations for each student to feel safe supported and successful with a bright future. For our staff, making these opportunities happen stems from ongoing strategic planning and learning and the level of staff engagement in ensuring our student success is remarkable.

The Rivers Secondary College welcomes to our team, Mrs Tracy McGrath who has been successful in gaining the Principal position at our Kadina High Campus. We welcome to our Richmond River High Campus, Jessica Ivy (HSIE), Ryan Everson (PDHPE), Andrew Ngeh (PDHPE), Maxine Nimmo (CAPA) and Timothy Wassell (TAS). Kate King and Nadine Toniello have joined us at our Lismore High Campus. Welcome to The Rivers Secondary College and we hope that you are enjoying the rich and vibrant community that you have joined.

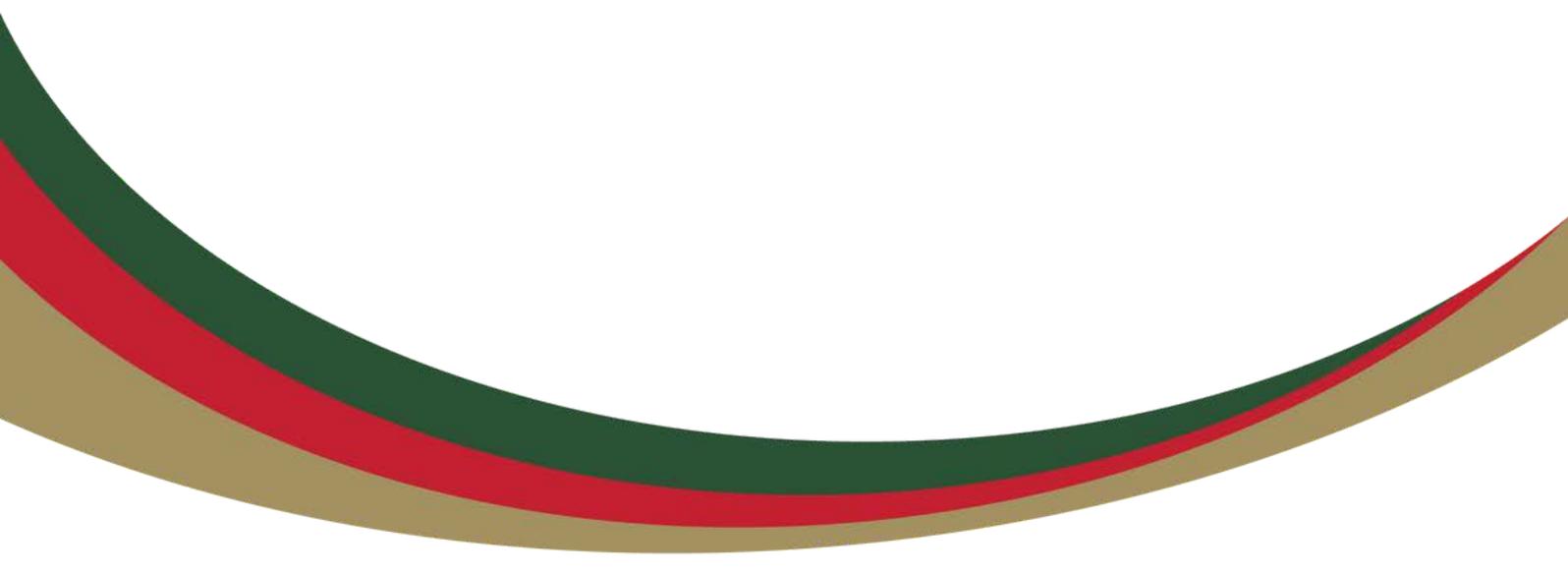
A primary focus of all public schools in NSW at the beginning of this year is "Our Plan for NSW Public Education". This plan diverges from previous departmental plans in that it recognises teachers and teaching ensuring that we fulfill our commitment that "Every student learns, grows and belongs in an equitable and outstanding education system." As we continue our journey of curriculum reform and implementation, we cannot help but notice the alignment between this new plan and the work we are undertaking within the college to strengthen our purpose and values of equity, excellence and engagement. The professional learning cycles that staff are engaged in ranging from Collaborative Learning Networks focused on curriculum implementation to workshops and extended learning opportunities to embed strategies to improve trauma informed practices and literacy and numeracy within classrooms and campuses, and evidenced based leadership learning are beginning to yield positive results for our students, with all campuses showing positive gains in these areas. Term two's staff development day, will focus on implementing the new curriculum and reinvigorating our focus on explicit teaching. This has been a focal point of the college for the past few years, and the instructional leadership provided by our Deputy Principal, Zoe Tiernan, has been invaluable in keeping us ahead of these reforms and in our ability to embed best practices to ensure our students can engage, thrive and grow.

I extend my gratitude to all the students and staff who showcased their campus to our community and future students at the Term One Open Evenings. The event was well attended, and feedback indicates families value the opportunity to view the campus facilities and speak with staff to clarify information. We have taken onboard feedback regarding the timing of the event with families eager to view all three of our excellent public education campuses.

Looking ahead to Term Two we are eagerly anticipating our Successful Futures Days for our senior cohort, the Student Leadership Camp at Mount Tamborine and our College NAIDOC celebrations among the many exciting opportunities awaiting our students and staff.

Bree Harvey-Bice

(Rel. Executive Principal)



Congratulations Mrs McGrath

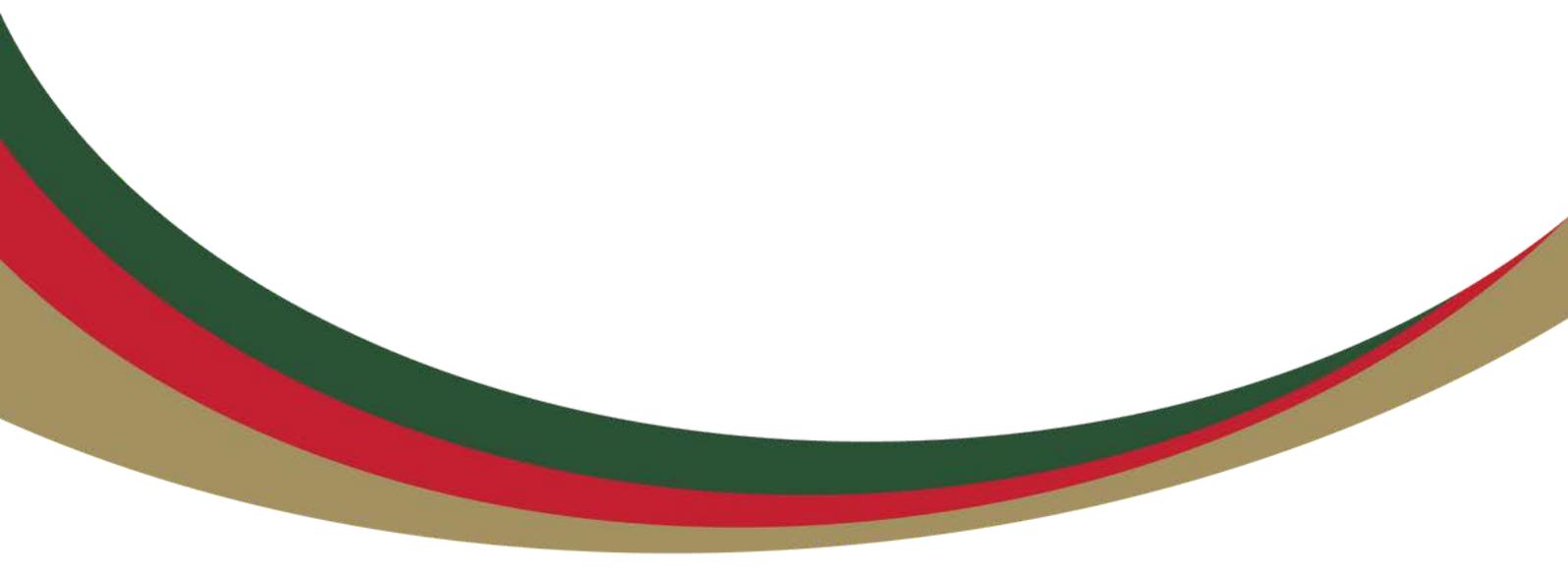


We are delighted to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Mrs Tracy McGrath on her successful appointment through the merit selection process to the role of Principal at TRSC- Kadina High Campus.

Mrs McGrath journey to this pivotal position has been marked by dedication and excellence. Having undertaken the role in a relieving capacity since term 4 last year and having previously fulfilled the role of Principal on relief occasions, she brings a wealth of experience and insight to her new role. Her tenure as Deputy Principal at Kadina High Campus has equipped her with a profound understanding of our college and campus ethos and a steadfast commitment to public education and educational leadership.

Mrs McGrath's connections within our local community and her intimate understanding of the diverse needs and learning styles of our students will undoubtedly steer Kadina towards creating excellence, equity and engagement. Her vision for fostering a nurturing learning environment make her an invaluable asset to our college community.

We are confident that under Mrs. McGrath's guidance, Kadina High Campus will thrive and continue the academic success that we saw in last years HSC results and the strong programs of wellbeing that support students into a bright future.



Proud and Deadly

We took time out to look back at the successes of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2023, with the Proud and Deadly Awards celebrated at rolling events across the three campuses.

The College dance group was a highlight, giving it everything in three exciting displays of culture and talent. The assemblies were well attended by community and families and it was wonderful to see you all in our schools.

Thanks to our deadly dance leaders John and Gemma, our community guests and our wonderful student leaders, for stepping up and making us all proud.



Girls to the Front

International Women's Day

International Women's Day on 8 March was marked at the College by an assembly at Lismore High Campus, while 50 students from across the College visited the Lismore Women's Festival at Southern Cross University. Students heard an inspirational keynote speech from Ashani Dante and took part in a range of festival activities.



Young Women in STEM

Our RASE team provided a wonderful opportunity for students to work with inspirational women in a range of STEM fields, who mentored the students through a design process to propose solutions to contemporary problems. The day included a guest appearance by the Australian Government's Women in STEM Ambassador, astrophysicist, and a Professor of Practice in Science Communication at the University of NSW, Lisa Harvey-Smith. The expert panel advised and judged the student teams' work, and the girls even made the TV news! Thanks Zane and Karen for the opportunities you provide.

Read on for more STEM news from RASE.



Sport, sport and more sport!

The Rivers sports teams have hit the ground running this year and our students are getting amongst it across a range of Rivers and representative teams.

Northern Rivers Zone Volleyball

TRSC Opens boys and girls Volleyball teams travelled to Evans River school on Monday 5 February for the Northern Rivers Zone Volleyball Gala Day. It was a fantastic day with all games played in good spirit. Highly competitive teams across our zone saw our boys team lose their game against Alstonville (21-15, 21-16) and the girls team were defeated against Casino (21-16, 23-21). Despite the losses, several of our Rivers students demonstrated outstanding skills earning them selection in the Northern Rivers Zone Volleyball team; Abbie (KHC), Shante (KHC), Harrison (LHC) and Jayda (KHC) as a reserve. Well done to all of our TRSC Volleyball representatives!



TRSC Open Boys and Girls Volleyball Teams

Northern Rivers Zone Football

Monday 4 March had the Northern Rivers Zone Football teams travel to Coffs Harbour to compete at the North Coast trials. First up the girls played Far North Coast and led 1-0 at half time with the final score being 1-1. They then played Mid North Coast and went down 1-0, then playing Lower North Coast which was a 0-0 draw. They ended up having Possibles vs Probables as there were many who were at similar skill levels. Three girls were selected to participate in this match with Amber representing TRSC-Richmond River Campus, Amber was also successful in being selected in the North Coast team to compete at the State Championships in Coffs Harbour 7-9 May.

The boys had a tough day at the office, a 3-0 loss to Mid North Coast, a 2-0 loss to Far North Coast and a 1-1 draw with Lower North Coast.



Zone players from Kadina High Campus, Lismore High Campus and Richmond River High Campus

Open Girls Touch Football Knockout

The weather wasn't great but It was a very successful day for the girls, showing off their skills and sportsmanship and winning the final 15-10 against Alstonville.



TRSC Open Girls Touch Football Team

Thanks to Mr Condon, Mr Eakin and Mr Galbraith for making it all happen for our young people.

Art, Culture, Music and more ...

The Rivers Secondary College has passionate staff that have collaborated to provide so many experiences and opportunities for our students, no matter what their interests, across the Lismore, Kadina and Richmond River High campuses. Here's just a sample.



Senior Visual Arts excursion to Sydney



Performing at Bluesfest



Music and costume design with industry professionals from Priscilla Queen of the Desert



Cultural exchange at SCU for senior Japanese language students



YOUNG WOMEN IN STEM

STEMming the Divide

This year's first event in the RASE "STEMming the Divide" initiative was the Young Women in STEM workshop. During this two-day seminar held at Southern Cross University, Lismore Campus, 44 students in years 8 to 10 from the three campuses worked on real-life problems with industry mentors. The girls worked with representatives from Lismore City Council, Rous County Council, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Australia.



Vicki Currie; LCC, Alex Dowling; RCC, Suzy Rogiers; DPI, Parya Samadi; LCC & Felismina Jom; RDA



Lilian; KHC, Isabelle; RRHC and Sienna; LHC working together.

Solutions

The mentors **identified** problems they were currently working on in their roles. The girls chose one of these to work on with their group and followed the STEM Design Thinking Process to bring their ideas to life. This involved researching the topic, **brainstorming** ideas, and creating a **plan**. The problems ranged from water wastage, reducing barriers for farmers to adopt sustainable practices, combatting oil waste in sewage systems, improving access to candidates for employers in the Northern Rivers and promoting the use of reusable menstrual products.

Pitch perfect

The workshop culminated with each group pitching their ideas to the mentors. The standard of their work and solutions was very high. The mentors thought so highly of some of these ideas and the enthusiasm of the groups, they are planning to work with these students to further develop the solutions.

This RASE workshop was funded by Google with the support of Australian Schools Plus. The industry mentors were coordinated by our local Regional Industry Education Partnerships Officer Jill McCall.



Congratulations to these young women for developing amazing solutions!



NEW YEAR - NEW PEOPLE

New Schools

Each year, we have new staff participating in RASE activities. This year is no exception. In 2024, we also welcome new schools to our academy - Blakebrook Public, Caniaba Public, Corndale Public and Wyrallah Public. To kick off the staff in our new schools and new staff in our existing schools, we have run induction professional learning sessions to upskill them in the world of design thinking.



Staff from Albert Park, Caniaba and Wyrallah tackling the old favourite "toy activity"



Our new Executive Principal, Bree, gets hands on with Ryan and Geraldine from Modanville

New Students

With the new staff having completed their inductions, it was time for the new students. Design thinking is a new process to many of our students, so explicit teaching is a critical part of developing them into highly effective problem solvers. We use some fun activities to engage them in a cycle of **identifying problems**, **brainstorming** and **planning solutions** then **prototyping**, **testing** and **improving** those solutions.



The junior class at Corndale were challenged to build a tower that could hold a cup on top using limited materials.



The senior class at Corndale built structures that could survive an earthquake, simulated by our "Swiftly Shaker"



NEW OPPORTUNITIES

RRHC iFarm

The Richmond River High Campus' iFarm has been relocated to their new site and is up and running, ready for new projects. This is a wonderful example of using technology in agriculture, with the ability to use sensors to monitor soil moisture, fertiliser concentrations, weather conditions and more. There are 58 iFarms across Australia with their data available to schools via the internet. This allows for collaboratoin between students from very different climate zones to investigate a range of agricultural projects. RASE project officers are working with RRHC staff to develop projects that will engage our primary school students from years 5 and 6 into year 7. Watch this space for more exciting news.



Staff from RRHC and RASE recieving their induction from Steve and Kate from iFarm Australia

Upcoming Opportunities

There are a lot of opportunities coming up for students. If you are interested in any of the events below, contact your RASE team.

More opportunities are published on our Facebook Page.



Keep up to date with what's going on and coming up with RASE via our socials

<https://www.facebook.com/RiversSTEM> and

https://www.instagram.com/rivers_academy_stem_excellence/

