From the School Council President

The school production - The Lion, The Witch and the Walk-In-Robe - was an absolute triumph! The performers' fun and enthusiasm was infectious, and the audience enjoyed every minute. Congratulations and thanks to all those involved.

On another matter, the School Council is very concerned about the Victorian Government's decision to cut the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from 2015. The EMA currently helps low-income families to provide for school costs - books, uniforms, excursions etc. More information can be found on the "Cover the Costs" campaign website - vcoss.org.au/cover-the-costs - and I urge parents and community members to support the campaign.

Adi Gilbert
School Council President
0439 484250
gilbert.adi.n@edumail.vic.gov.au
Letter to Terry Mulder, State Member for Polwarth

September 2014

Dear Minister,

I'm writing on behalf of the school community at Lavers Hill K-12 College to express our concern at the Victorian Government's decision to cut the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from next year.

Our school has a high proportion of low-income families and the EMA has helped them meet school costs - books, uniforms, excursions etc. We have a high level of commitment from our community to their children's education, and the vast majority of our families direct their EMA payments to the school.

Our concern is that the replacement for the EMA does not provide targeted assistance. By directing EMA money into so-called "equity funding" the risk is that it will not be used to benefit those who need it most. And because this new funding arrangement won't have the same public visibility of the current EMA, there is a danger that it'll become exposed to general funding cuts in the future and will be gradually eroded over time.

I hope that you will be able to represent us in this matter and put forward our views to the Minister for Education that targeted assistance payments are the most effective way of supporting students, ensuring that every young person has equal access to opportunities at school.

On another subject, it's been a while since I wrote to you regarding our issues with school buses and I'm still hoping that you might find time to look into this matter again for us.

As always you're very welcome to visit our school to see first-hand what we achieve up here, and what more we could achieve with a little extra assistance.

Regards,

Adi Gilbert
School Council President
Open letter to the Minister for Education from the Education Equity Coalition

February 2014

Dear Mr Dixon,

Thousands of children have started or have returned to school over the last week and many families are noticing the impact of back-to-school costs on their budgets. However, for many families, the costs associated with state schooling are simply beyond reach. The escalating costs of uniforms, books, stationery, excursions, camps, fundraising and technological requirements – such as computers and tablets – are placing an increasing burden on families.

The Education Equity Coalition is all too aware of this impact as we support those families who simply cannot meet these costs, by providing the funding or the materials that they need.

We consistently hear reports of children who miss school camps and excursions because of the costs involved, children who choose to skip school because they do not have the correct uniform, money for the bus fare or even food for lunch. Increasingly we hear of students who choose their elective subjects based on what their family can afford, rather than what they are good at or what they aspire to do later in life.

Our agencies already struggle to meet demand and so we are very concerned about the Government’s decision to completely cut the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from 2015.

The EMA has helped families to cover the costs of uniforms, excursions, camps and information technology at home for over 20 years. It is targeted to families holding healthcare cards and the Victorian Government itself has indicated that around 70 per cent of families sign this payment over to schools, which shows that it is a well targeted payment delivering significant assistance to families and schools.

While we commend the Victoria Government’s commitment to Better Schools Funding, we are concerned that this has been at the expense of the EMA. Extra resources are needed in schools, but it still leaves the question of who will support families who struggle to pay for their kids to access all the great opportunities schools provide.
We know the Victorian Government believes education is the most effective way to support young people to reach their goals and that the Government is committed to providing the best possible education system. We want to support children to go to school and to stay at school but are concerned that the decision to cut the EMA will compound rates of school disengagement.

We are calling on the Victorian Government to continue to provide targeted assistance to families to ensure all children can participate fully in the range of educational opportunities available to them. This should constitute a genuine replacement of the full EMA. We want to work in partnership with the Government to develop alternative support measures for families as soon as possible, to deliver certainty to families, schools and the community sector upon which Victorians rely in times of need.

Yours sincerely,

Education Equity Coalition members
Anglicare Victoria, Ardoch Youth Foundation, Bendigo Community Health Services, Berry Street, Community Information and Support Victoria, Council of Single Mothers and their Children Victoria, Catholic Social Services Victoria, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services, Kids Under Cover, MacKillop Family Services, Parents Victoria, The Salvation Army, Statewide Children’s Resource Program, State Schools’ Relief, Victorian Council of Social Service, Victorian Student Representative Council, Victorian Principals Association, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne City Mission, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Foster Care Association of Victoria, Centre for Multicultural Youth

**SRC focus on ... celebrating the Production**

What a great term we just had. The play was a terrific success enjoyed by children and staff. We had a dress up and raffle for the senior students’ formal. The school website is going well and is looking really good. We enjoyed sports days at Apollo Bay and the grade 5/6 community project about sleeping rough is making everyone aware of homelessness in Australia. On Friday students are invited to come to school dressed as their character, or their favourite character, from “The Lion, The Witch and the Walk-in Robe” so we can all finish the term with fun and laughter. Bring along a gold coin donation!
Primary News

Sleeping Rough is Tough Night @
Lavers Hill College!

Be part of a caring community!

Friday October 17th @ 7pm (overnight sleeping rough)

Register @ your closest local shop or
@ Lavers Hill P-12 College.

Registration is $10 per person, or $30 for a family of four or more. All money raised will go towards buying street swags for the homeless.

WHAT CAN I BRING ON THE NIGHT?

- Sleeping bag
- Tarp for protection
- Cardboard to sleep on

Food will be available to buy for dinner and breakfast on Saturday morning.
**Indonesian News – 7-9 Warung**

On Friday 5\(^{th}\) September, the Year 7-9 Indonesian class held its own Warung, selling the Indonesian food they have been learning to cook throughout this term. Five delicious dishes were prepared by the students and we had many happy customers on the day. I would like to say a big terima kasih (thank you) to Ibu Yanti, who has come to share her cooking expertise with the students during the term.

- Ibu Sarah

**From the Director**

Well our production of *The Lion, The Witch and the Walk-In Robe* is over for another year! Two absolutely amazing shows were staged with great highlights to remember both on stage and off. Again I congratulate all the wonderful cast members, but in particular our lead students for without their amazing dedication and talent the show would not have been so professional. I thank you all for your commitment and dedication and applaud your every effort. What an amazing group of talented students I am so proud of you all!!

I would like to express my greatest thanks to the Staff Production Team for their hard work and support in helping to bring my vision for the show to life. Your enthusiasm and support has been so appreciated.

- Thank you Peter Thompson and crew for creating a stage setting just as I had imagined it! With the most magnificent Narnia back drop imagined! Thanks to Deb Lesleighter as well for helping with small props.
- Special thanks to Sue Harrington for her endless hours of work over the two terms to organize and sew costumes for the show. Your talent and precision to get everything
just right is a credit to you. Our characters came to life thanks to you…they were spot on!

• To all the lighting crew under the direction of Melissa Potter and all the back stage crew following the very detailed plans from our Stage manager Jan Ratcliffe …both shows ran smoothly and shone even more brightly due to your care and management.

• To Randall Fitzgerald and David Ivens on sound and music after much discussion we decided to hire head set mics and this took the worry out of not hearing our wonderful cast members…great decision!

• To our makeup artists Michelle Ferrari and Anne O’Sullivan and crew, your face painting creations were just perfect.

• To Denise Hook for feeding us on Thursday night, being on the door and for organizing the very generous raffle prizes.

• To Kim Robertson for giving up her time weekly to help assist and train our vocalists. We would not have been able to produce such a wonderful show without your extraordinary talents, tireless energy and dedication. Thank you.

It has also been a huge pleasure working with our very own talented dancer, Chloe Rose Suares on the dance choreography. Her ability to work with the junior school members, teaching them and assisting with classes has been an amazing support to me and I thank her for all her contributions including working with the kinder students.

• Thanks Deb and Louise for supporting our weekly dance routine practices and help on the night with supervision….they even went on!! YEH!!

A massive thank you to all our special helpers, parents and students who helped with prop design, donations and construction.

• A special thanks to Sam Constantinou who donated and created our magnificent ‘wardrobe’ and involved herself in many stage and prop projects including the magical snow which the students loved!!

• We thank our publicity team which included Deb Whitecross and Linda Harriot for ticketing, programme creation and posters and to our very own Andrew Kohane for his support to all throughout the production planning and performances and transporting equipment from Geelong.

• To all the senior students who volunteered their time to work together as back stage crew

• Also not forgetting back at school supervision was supported by Susan Collingbourne, Michelle Ferrari and Kath Speirs.

Finally I could not have been able to direct or coordinate all the scenes without an extra pair of hands. I am enormously thankful to Sarah Douglas for her patience, support, vision
and ideas and for keeping me calm and sane throughout this wonderful journey with our K-12 students here at Lavers Hill College.

Well that’s all folks till 2016!!

CHOOKAS everyone

Mrs. Kathryn Doherty

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We have lots of photos of the show which may be obtained by contacting the school. Alternatively, if you receive this Newsletter by email you will already have digital access to the photos produced.

So, if you would like to be added to that list please add your details below or email directly to the College lavers.hill.p12@edumail.vic.gov.au or via: the editor fitzgerald.randall.j@edumail.vic.gov.au