

Maclean High School

Newsletter

June 2025

www.maclean-h.schools.nsw.edu.au

02 6645 2244



Principal's Report

As we enter June, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the recent activities and accomplishments that have enriched our school community.

We kicked off the month with our Athletics Carnival, which was a fantastic display of sportsmanship and talent. It was wonderful to see so many students participating enthusiastically across various events, showcasing their determination and team spirit. Congratulations to all participants and especially to the champions who excelled in their respective categories.

Another highlight was the Senior Parent Teacher Night, where our dedicated staff engaged with parents and guardians to discuss student progress and pathways. This format was a change from our usual combined Parent Teacher night and was a great opportunity to focus in on our senior students. Our Junior Parent Teacher night is coming up, following the distribution of Semester 1 Reports. This collaboration is vital in supporting our students' academic journeys, and I thank all families for their participation and the invaluable insights shared.

I would also like to commend our School Captains, Jasper and Campbell, for their recent trip to Sydney, where they visited Parliament and Government House. Unfortunately, we were only able to send two of our three School Captains to this event. This experience not only broadened their understanding of civic responsibility but also inspired them to take on their leadership roles with renewed vigour and share this with the rest of our student leadership team.



Principal's Report

In addition, we recently attended the Inter School Public Speaking Competition, organised by the Maclean Rotary, featuring participants from Pacific Valley School and Maclean High School. This event was hosted by Pacific Valley and was a wonderful opportunity for students to develop their public speaking skills and demonstrate their confidence. The overall competition was a draw with Eamon winning the Junior section and Paige winning the Senior section. I am proud of all our students who participated and represented our school so well.

As this term comes to a close, I would like to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to Penny Graham, our Relieving Deputy Principal, who will be leaving us at the end of this term. Penny has done a fantastic job, utilising her skills in process and policy to help drive real and sustainable change at Maclean High School. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours. The position is currently advertised, and we look forward to welcoming an outstanding applicant to continue the excellent work Penny has initiated.

Thank you all for your ongoing support and commitment to our school. Together, we continue to make a positive impact in the lives of our students.

James Witchard
Principal



Interschool Public Speaking Competition



IMPORTANT DATES

JUNE

5-6
Sydney
Captains
Excursion

10
Senior
Parent Teacher
Evening

12
Athletics
Carnival

12
Junior
Music
Night

26
Subject selection
evening
Yr 8 into 9
Yr 10 into 11
for 2026

JULY

4
Last day of
Term 2

21
Staff
Development
Day

22
First Day of
Term 3 for all
students

29 Junior
Parent
Teacher
Evening





Hospitality High Tea

Hospitality students skills are improving this term! Students have been making and baking a range of foods including caramel slice, brioche rolls, orange and poppy seed muffins, quiches and fresh bruschetta. The High Tea event saw patrons enjoying chilled and wonderfully warm beverages with a combination of savoury and sweet treats. Well done, Year 11 and 12!

Thank you card
from Harwood Is PS



River of Learning



The 15th River of Learning

Celebration Day, held as part of Reconciliation Week, was a huge success. The day included a special morning tea for the Elders, in the library. The whole school then went to the sports courts for an assembly and a smoking ceremony where awards were given to students from Year 7-12 who have consistently exhibited the characteristics of Reconciliation.



The student body was treated to two dances from our Aboriginal Boys Dance Group performing a Cleansing Dance and our Aboriginal Girls Group performing a Contemporary Dance.

Parents, Elders and community guests were then invited to the Gym to view the Year 7 classwork and then to enjoy the Celebration Day Ceremony where they were treated to music, dance and speeches by our students.



River of Learning

River of Learning

Guest speaker Zhanae Whalley gave an inspiring speech focusing on this year's Reconciliation Theme, Bridging Now to Next.

Zhanae a proud Yaegl Woman attended Maclean High School between 2016-2022. She now works at Maclean Public School as a Learning Support Officer. Zhanae started her training for this role when she attended Maclean High School through a school-based traineeship in education.

In her speech, she asked people to think about where they want to go in life and how learning, culture and community can help you get to where you would like to go.



Awards were presented to Year 7 students who had consistently displayed a commitment to their classwork since coming to high school and thank you certificates were given to the Elders for their participation in the River of Learning program and the Cultural Tours that were conducted in Term 1.

It was a lovely day where people from the community and the school could meet, reflect and enjoy each other's company while supporting such an inclusive and unique event on the school's calendar.



River of Learning



Girls to Graduates



Macquarie University have returned this year to offer the Girls to Graduates program for a second time. This program is designed to increase participation of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) careers by presenting learning and leadership opportunities. The program kicked off this year with our ten participating students learning how to run and present two practical lessons.



Program 2025

The next day the girls had to become teachers, showing two Year 8 classes how to analyse native plants for antioxidants and how to build a solar cell using raspberries. The girls did a magnificent job of presenting the information and guiding the students through the activities. Afterwards they were able to spend time with lecturers and students from Macquarie University, asking questions and learning about careers in STEM and life at university. There are further activities planned for later in the year, and we look forward to seeing the girls do even more amazing work!





Year 11 Biology - Biological Diversity Study Day

This term Year 11 Biology students got the opportunity to go to the Biological Diversity Study Day at the Coffs Harbour Botanic Gardens. This day is designed to bring the resources that city students are easily able to access to rural and remote students who do not have the same opportunities. The students were rotated through three lectures, each on different aspects of the biology syllabus.

Taronga zoo did a presentation on adaptations, which included an opportunity to meet and pat a snake, a shingleback lizard, a possum, and the star of the day, Largo the tortoise, who had appeared on an episode of Border Patrol when someone had tried to illegally smuggle him into the country!

Next was a presentation from the Australian National University on evolution and macrofauna, which included some hands-on experience with real fossils, and the chance to meet George, the enormous skull of a diprotodon. Students learned about the evolution of the platypus and how to determine how closely related different species are.



Last came the lecture on eucalyptus adaptations, which included a beautiful walk around the stunning Coffs Harbour Botanical Gardens to identify all the different species. We were very lucky that the rain held off, and that the Botanic Gardens agreed to host such an important day for Northern Rivers students.



Interactive History



What do chickens and history have in common? Why, they are both an important part of the activity that Year 7K completed on Friday the 30th of May. Students worked in teams to follow the mummy recipe and prepare their chickens for the afterlife. Subsequent weeks will prove if they have followed the ancient instructions carefully enough to have TutenChicken or Cluckopatra at the end of the term! Should be an interesting finish to the Investigating History topic in 2025.

Mrs Dehnert

Year 9 French Breakfast

Thursday 29 May, Year 9 Students were treated to a cultural experience without having to travel to France. Students indulged in a French breakfast consisting of croissants, with Nutella, jam and cream, and hot chocolate. While having their breakfast students listened to French café music.

Ce matin, nous avons pris un petit-déjeuner français. Nous avons mangé des croissants avec du Nutella, de la confiture et de la crème. Nous avons bu du chocolat chaud. Miam Miam!

The food was amazing!! Alivia
The best morning I have ever had...Maliyah
It was so fun and delicious!...Lucy
The hot chocolate was delicious..Lily

I couldn't stop eating!...Char
I had so much fun. The food was so good! Aila.



Project to boost disability education programs in NSW Schools

In term 4, 2024 Maclean High School students and teachers participated in the consultation phase of an education program to boost disability programs in schools. In phase 2 of the program held recently, two students had the opportunity to participate in videos that will build understanding of disability among peers in NSW public schools. Filming took place in several areas of the school with visitors remarking how fabulous our environment is.

These students shared their experiences and perspectives to help build disability understanding and foster inclusion in NSW public schools.

Charles and Correy shared their stories, read scripts to camera and engaged in conversations, showcased their talents, and demonstrated daily school life. They were excellent ambassadors for Maclean High School who demonstrated our values throughout this experience.

The film will be distributed to NSW schools by the end of the school year. A special screening at MHS will be held soon after.

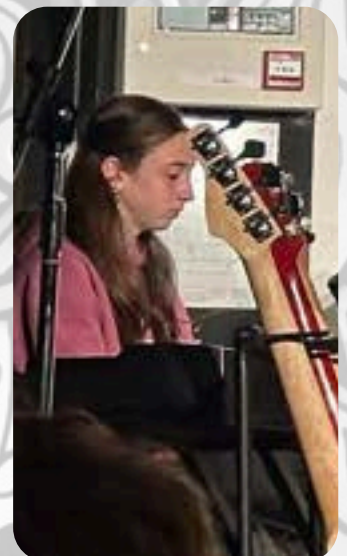
Mrs Susan Bradley - LaST



The U3A Men's and Women's Shed are again generously supporting our students to explore different skill sets. On this occasion, Allan from the shed worked tirelessly with Fire to Flourish and Botero Maclean to organise an amazing opportunity for students to learn about all things Botero coffee! From the factory and back of house through to employment opportunities in the hospitality industry and finally the intricate process of delivering the perfect coffee every time! Thank you Fire to Flouish for sponsoring our students to gain valuable employability skills.

JUNIOR MUSIC NIGHT

The Junior Music Night started with a bang as the MC Charles tickled the crowd's funny bone with his humorous introductions and playful banter with the Music teacher, Mr. Mitchell. The performers ranged from Year 8 to Year 10 and really wowed the crowd with their musical talent, ensemble work, and crowd interaction. A full house in the audience meant extra chairs needed to be added for the late arrivals on the night. Not a soul left disappointed, as this opportunity gave emerging talents the space to shine for a crowd beyond the classroom and connected their learning to the real world. Nerves that were racing through the performers were quickly replaced with feelings of elation as first time performers and seasoned musos took to the stage together. An unforgettable night that was a credit to their Music teacher Mr. Mitchell. Jam on Grasshoppers!









Junior Boys AFL



Woolgoolga Gala Day

Our junior boys AFL team recently travelled to Woolgoolga to take part in the AFL Gala Day — a fantastic experience for all involved. The day offered a great mix of competition and fun, with several students who regularly play AFL showing off their skills, while others had the chance to try the sport for the very first time.

The team played three games throughout the day. While the first match saw us go down by a fair margin, the boys showed resilience and strong improvement in the following two games, narrowly missing out by just a couple of goals in each.

Standout players for MHS included Bodhi, Eamon, Mostyn, Jarris, Oscar and Leo, who led by example and kept spirits high.

A big thank you to all students for their sportsmanship and enthusiasm. The AFL Gala Days are open to junior and senior boys and girls, and we're looking forward to getting more teams involved next year!



Coffs Coast Classic School Surfing Competition

On Wednesday 18th June, Maclean High School sent 11 students to Woolgoolga to compete in the Coffs Coast Classic School Surfing Competition, held at Mullawarra Beach. This open event welcomed schools from across the Coffs region through to the Lower Clarence.

Conditions were challenging for some, with clean 1–2 ft waves and offshore winds for most of the day. As the onshore winds picked up later, the swell improved and became more surfable.

Two of our students advanced through multiple heats, with Dusty making it to the junior boys quarterfinals. Oliver impressed in the senior boys division, progressing all the way to the final and finishing 3rd overall.

Well done to all students who participated and helped make it a great day out. We look forward to sending another team to the event next year.



CHS Boys Open Tennis

The first round of the Opens Boys Tennis finally went ahead on Thursday 22nd May against a very strong Senior team from

Alstonville High School. MHS was represented by Seniors Nathan, Daniel and Juniors Lachlan and Finn. Although Maclean did not manage to get a win, the scores did not reflect the quality of the tennis played.

Each match was contested with determination and competitiveness. I'm sure

Alstonville will go far in the competition, having made it to the semi's last year. Thanks to Finn, for prioritising the team and showing up despite not feeling 100 percent. I applaud the team's efforts, camaraderie with the opposing team and outstanding sportsmanship on the day.



CHS Open Netball

Jazz and Olana representing Maclean High and North Coast at Tamworth last month.

They played so well with the team, at a very high standard competition.



Break time fun in the Library



Board Games



Minecraft

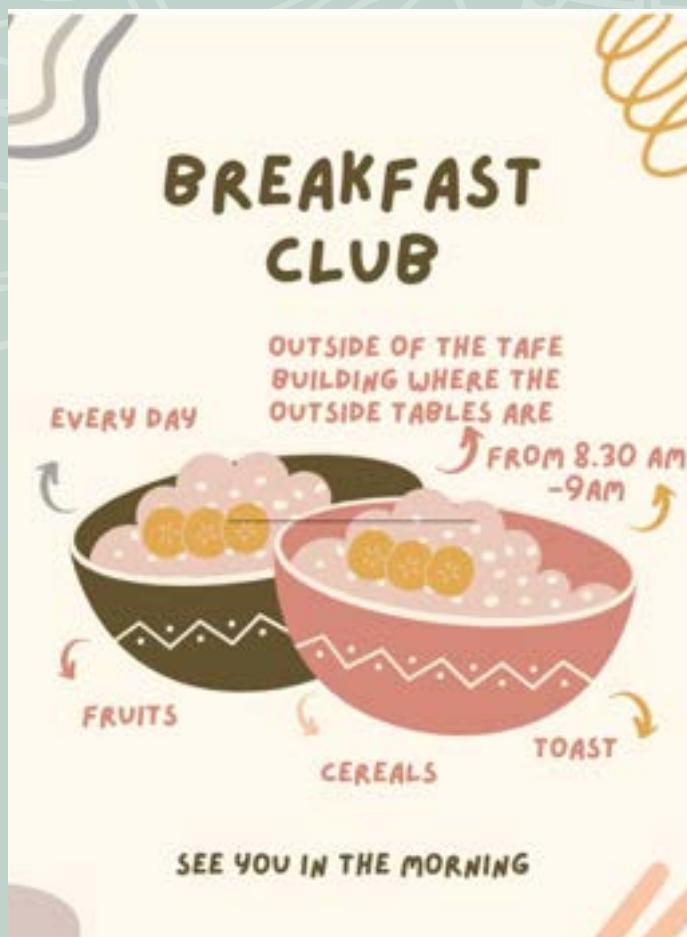


Chess Club



Cards & Uno





Look for joy, you'll find it.
 Look for anger, there it is.
 Look for fear; you'll see it looking at you.
 Look for hope, and you'll feel like, "I've got this".
 Look for help, it's there.
 What are you going to look for today?

#saysomething #stymie #studentsfirst #kindnessalways #forthekids
 #safelearningspaces #wegotyou #wehearyou #healtheharm #nohateheremate
 #cultureofcare



Coffs Careers Expo

Recently, our Stage 5 students attended the Coffs Careers Expo, where they explored a wide range of future career and study options. The event featured stalls from universities, TAFE NSW, and various industry groups, giving students valuable insights into life beyond school.

Students spoke with university representatives about different courses and pathways, learning about subject selection, entry requirements, and campus life. TAFE NSW provided hands-on information about vocational training and trade qualifications, showing how students can build practical careers without needing an ATAR.

One of the highlights was learning about pathways into the NSW Police Force. Students discovered the requirements to join and the many roles within the force, including forensics and youth liaison. The Forestry Corporation of NSW also captured students' interest, showing how forestry combines science, conservation, and outdoor work.

The day helped students think more clearly about their futures. Many walked away inspired and informed, with a better understanding of the many options available after school.

As students prepare for senior subject selections, experiences like the Coffs Careers Expo play a key role in helping them make confident, informed decisions.



HSC Visual Arts

Our Year 12 Visual Arts students recently travelled to Brisbane for an enriching day of artistic exploration and career inspiration. The group visited the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) and the Queensland Art Gallery, where they experienced a diverse range of traditional and contemporary artworks.

A major highlight of the excursion was the 11th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT11)—an internationally acclaimed exhibition showcasing innovative works from artists across the Asia Pacific region. Featuring bold installations, video art, sculpture, and mixed media, the exhibition explored powerful themes such as identity, cultural memory, and sense of place. Students engaged thoughtfully with the artworks, asked meaningful questions, and represented our school with maturity and curiosity.

To enhance the experience, Careers Adviser Miss Fisher joined the excursion to offer guidance on potential pathways in the creative industries. She spoke with students about career opportunities in areas such as visual arts, design, animation, curation, and more. A key part of the discussion focused on the evolving nature of creative work in the age of technology. Miss Fisher encouraged students not to be discouraged by the rise of AI, reminding them that while technology can assist in many areas, it can't replicate the human imagination, emotional depth, and cultural insight that artists bring to their work.

The day was not only artistically inspiring but also empowering. Students left with a deeper appreciation of the art world and a clearer vision of how their passion for creativity can translate into fulfilling and sustainable careers.



Screen Futures Day



Students across the region along with some from MHS recently got a behind-the-scenes look at the screen industry through the exciting Screen Futures Day. Held at Lennox Head this is an annual hands-on initiative run by the Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) program. Designed to ignite interest and provide real-world insight into careers in film and television, the excursion offered students the opportunity to participate in interactive workshops across a variety of disciplines. From costume design and makeup special effects to filming for social media, sound effects, casting and auditioning, and storytelling, students were able to explore the many creative roles that make up the screen industry.

The workshops, led by experienced industry professionals, gave students a practical taste of the skills and teamwork involved in screen production. Whether crafting eerie soundscapes, designing unique character looks, or learning how to pitch a story, participants were encouraged to collaborate, create, and think outside the box.

A highlight of the excursion was a special guest appearance by Maia Mitchell, the Australian actor known for her roles in *Mortified*, *Teen Beach Movie*, and *The Fosters*. Originally from Lismore, Maia shared her personal journey from growing up in a regional town to making it on international screens. Her talk was both inspiring and relatable, offering students a glimpse into the dedication and resilience needed to pursue a career in the entertainment industry.

Screen Futures exemplifies how the RIEP program is bridging the gap between education and industry, especially in regional areas. By providing access to industry-standard experiences and role models like Maia, the program is helping students envision a future in creative industries and empowering them to take the next step. Keep an eye on Sentral, your emails and Schoolbytes so you don't miss out on opportunities like these.



Uni ATAR Alternate Entry

Many Year 12 students are now exploring early university entry programs—a fantastic opportunity to secure a place at university before final exams are even completed. These programs allow students to receive conditional offers based on more than just their ATAR, helping reduce pressure and provide clarity about what lies ahead.

What Do Universities Look For?

While each university has its own application process, most early entry programs consider a range of factors, including:

Year 11 academic results

School recommendation or endorsement

Personal statements that explain your interests, goals, and motivation

Involvement in extracurricular activities, leadership, or community service

Commitment to study and learning

These programs are a great option for students who have shown consistent effort and engagement throughout high school, even if they are not aiming for a high ATAR.

Why Apply for Early Entry?

Reduces stress – Knowing you have a place at university can ease pressure during HSC exams.

Rewards consistency – Recognises your hard work in Year 11 and across your senior studies.

Supports planning – Helps students and families make informed decisions about post-school options earlier in the year.

What Should You Do Now?

Check Sentral – A list of currently open early entry programs is available. Stay up to date with deadlines and application requirements.

Book an appointment with the Careers Adviser – They can help you identify suitable programs, guide you through the application process, and review your personal statement.

Be prepared – Gather your Year 11 reports, think about what makes you a strong candidate, and start your application early.

Early entry is not just for top academic performers, it's for motivated students with clear goals and a commitment to learning. If you're in Year 12 and considering university, explore early entry options now. It could be the first step toward a smoother, more confident transition into life beyond school.

Image via University of Wollongong



VET Work Placement =

In Years 11 and 12, many students at our school choose to take part in Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses. These courses are designed to give students hands-on experience and industry-recognised qualifications while they are still at school. An important part of every VET course is work placement.

What Is Work Placement?

Work placement is when students spend time working with an employer in a real workplace as part of their VET course. It gives students the chance to apply the skills they've learned in the classroom in a real-world setting. Work placement usually lasts for one or two weeks and is organised in partnership with businesses and training organisations.

How Is Work Placement Different from Work Experience?

While both work placement and work experience involve spending time in a workplace, they are quite different:

Work Experience is usually done in Stage 5 and gives students a general idea of what it's like to work in a certain industry. It's more about observing and getting a feel for the work environment.

Work Placement, on the other hand, is part of a VET course. It is more structured and focused on practising specific skills related to the course and industry. Students are expected to complete real tasks and sometimes even get assessed during their placement.

In short, work experience is about exploring, while work placement is about developing job-ready skills for a specific career path.

Why Is Work Placement Important?

Real Experience: Students get to experience what it's like to work in their chosen industry. This helps them decide if it's the right career path for them.

Skill Development: It helps students build practical skills like teamwork, communication, time management, and problem-solving.

Industry Contacts: Students can meet professionals in the industry and make connections that may help with future job opportunities.

Confidence: Being in a real work environment helps students grow in confidence and feel more prepared for life after school.

VET Courses Offered at Our School

At our school, we are proud to offer a range of VET courses, each with its own work placement opportunities:

Certificate III in Sports Coaching

Students learn how to plan and deliver coaching sessions and get to work with local sports clubs and schools.



Learning skills for real jobs

Certificate II in Primary Industries

Students gain hands-on experience in agriculture, animal care, or horticulture—perfect for those interested in working outdoors or with animals.

Certificate II in Construction

This course prepares students for work in the building and construction industry, with work placement on real construction sites.

Certificate I in Manufacturing and Engineering

Students learn the basics of working with tools and machines, ideal for those looking at a future in engineering, metalwork, or fabrication.

Certificate II in Hospitality

This course introduces students to the fast-paced world of food and beverage service, preparing them for roles in cafes, restaurants, and hotels. Work placement allows students to gain experience in kitchens, front-of-house service, and customer interaction.

VET Can Lead to University Pathways

VET courses don't just prepare students for work—they can also open doors to university study. Some universities now recognise Certificate III qualifications as part of their entry requirements. For example, Griffith University offers entry into the Bachelor of Exercise Science to students who have completed a Certificate III in Sports Coaching, without needing an ATAR. This is a fantastic opportunity for students who are passionate about sport and fitness to take a practical pathway into higher education and future careers such as physiotherapy, sports science, or personal training. Pictured is Yr 11 student Robert who has recently done Work Placement with Andrew Tom for his Certificate II in Construction



Maclean



Celebrates

Congratulations to all awardees at the Term 2 Celebration Assemblies.

Students were awarded for attendance over 95%, Top 10 PBL point scorers and Year Adviser awards for each year.

Each stage were also treated to musical and drama performances. Overall winner of the Term 2 laptop for 100% attendance was Logan.



Everyone deserves to feel safe at school

Please treat our staff and students with **kindness and respect**

Aggressive behaviour will **not be tolerated**
Together, we can create a **safe and harmonious environment** for our students and staff



education.nsw.gov.au



Helpline Numbers/Online Resources

Kids Helpline: 1800 551800 or www.kidshelp.com.au

Lifeline: 13 1114 or www.lifeline.org.au

Headspace: 1800 650890 or www.eheadspace.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 224636 or www.beyondblue.org.au

Reachout: <http://au.reachout.com>

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659467

Parent Line NSW: 1300 1300 52 or www.parentline.org.au

WayAhead Directory: <http://directory.wayahead.org.au>

Mental Health Telephone Access Line: 1800 011511 (operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

It is staffed by clinicians who can provide advice, make referrals and link callers to the Mental Health Service in their local health district).

School Counsellors: Mr Andrew Allen & Ms Tay Cone

Wellbeing & Health In-reach Nurse Coordinator (WHIN): Ms Sally Loy (0484 648 062) Further Information for the WHIN program:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/whinprogram>

