

Newsletter, Term 2 2010

From the Editor

Dear Colleagues

I trust the year is bringing you many enriching experiences as you continue to serve students in the middle years. We now have a new Management Committee with Mr Graeme Evans at the helm as President. It is appropriate that we congratulate and thank Mr Junn Kato for his energy, vision and passion as past President. Junn's work has been quite extraordinary and we are very fortunate to still have him on the Committee in his role as Online Manager.

Chris French

Junn remains on the Committee, taking up the new role of Online Manager. Sandra Hawken and Leigh Williams also step down as Committee members, and I acknowledge their professionalism and expertise in their respective roles, and their dedication to the MYSA team.

Just recently I had the opportunity to visit New Zealand and join with the NZAIMS (New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schools) Executive meeting. I acknowledge their hospitality and openness in including me in their meetings over the few days. As an Association, MYSA is seeking to strengthen the connections that we have with NZAIMS, and look for ways in which we can be mutually supportive of each other. While overseas, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Associations that gives direction to the links we are forging. We can learn much from our trans-Tasman colleagues. They are in the enviable position of having direct and frequent contact with the New Zealand Minister for Education, who seeks their input in a variety of policy and procedural matters. Given the various happenings at national and state levels in Australia, perhaps a similar door will open for MYSA. Let's not be afraid to have big dreams!

Graeme Evans MYSL

President's Report

Term 2 2010

This term sees the establishment of a new MYSA Management Committee for the next 12 months. The members of the Committee, elected at the Annual General Meeting in May, represent an ever increasing diversity which I believe will further add to the depth, and expertise of MYSA. Committee members now come from NSW, Queensland and the ACT, and represent State, Catholic and Independent sectors. Some are on the Management Committee for the first time, and bring freshness and enthusiasm, while others have been on the Committee for many years, adding the necessary experience and continuity to keep the MYSA machine well-oiled.

I would like to make special mention of the outgoing MYSA President, Junn Kato. Junn stepped into the role unexpectedly, when the former President left to take up an overseas position. However, Junn quickly rose to the challenge and rather than merely managing the role, he made headway in many areas while encouraging and supporting the Management Committee to do the same.

MYSA President's AGM Report 2009-2010

One of the most satisfying experiences for middle years teachers is to see a student move from one who completes tasks because they must, to one who pursues learning for its intrinsic value. In any given classroom, we are likely to find both kinds of learner. This contrast within classrooms is fascinating because it appears to reflect a broader dichotomy amongst teachers, schools and leaders. There are those who engage in their work because they are made to, and those who engage because they believe in what they are doing. MYSA was founded by, and is run on behalf of, schools and

educators who fall into the latter category.

I therefore wish to thank each of you who volunteer your time for the Association. You do it because of what you believe in, not because a superior is demanding it of you. Without it, the Association would be unable to continue its advocacy which has recently taken on some new directions.

Leader Membership

In recognition of the progress made by many teachers in the middle years, a new category of leadership has been instituted. Leader membership focuses on supporting the development of school leaders with a focus on middle schooling. Communiqués have been sent to Leader members and there are plans for a study tour in the coming months. I wish to thank Graeme Evans and his Committee for their work on this initiative.

Travelling Scholar – A New Professional Learning Model

As a way of developing an outlet for advocacy during non-conference years, a Travelling Scholar Program has been implemented. A number of schools around Australia have played host to Professor Bob Lingard over the past months as he provided us with another lens through which to view current changes in curriculum and assessment in Australia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bob, the hosting schools and all attendees for their participation in these events. Many thanks also to Nanette Murphy and Susan Hearfield for their work behind the scenes as we continue to explore options for advocacy outside of our conference cycle. Judith Baenen is scheduled to be our scholar for the second half of 2010.

NZAIMS and MSAWA

This past year has seen significant development in our relationships with other associations. A big thank you must go to Graeme Evans for recently travelling to Wellington to participate in an NZAIMS Management Meeting. We are also continuing to explore opportunities for collaboration with the Middle Schooling Association of Western Australia (MSAWA). There will be a number of positive opportunities for our Associations to work together as we continue to advocate for students.

Flying Start – Queensland

Arising from a Queensland Government review of education, 'A Flying Start' is a consultation seeking feedback concerning (amongst other things) the move of Year 7 into secondary schools in Queensland. MYSA has been represented at a number of these

consultations. By all indications, it appears that this will renew interest in the middle years of schooling for many in Queensland.

Australian Curriculum

I'd also like to thank members who have provided feedback to ACARA concerning the draft Australian Curriculum documents for Science, Mathematics, English and History. In particular, I would like to thank Emily Sangster for her thoughtful advice during the early phases of the curriculum's development which has provided us with opportunities to advocate for young adolescents in a range of related consultations and forums.

Thank you and Farewell

This year, we bid farewell and say a big thank you to Leigh Williams, who has been our Website Manager for the past 12 months. Leigh had previously served as Secretary on our Committee. While she will be missed, we wish her the very best in the exciting new chapter of life she is now exploring. I have vacated the role of President this year but will still be on the Management Committee. I have appreciated the support shown to me by Committee members. Graeme's leadership will prove to be another important contribution to the learning and development of young adolescents in their middle years of schooling.

Junn Kato MYSL
22nd May 2010

MYSA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2010

POSITION	NAME	INSTITUTION
President	Graeme Evans	St Philip's Christian College, NSW
Vice President	Emily Sangster	Queensland Studies Authority
Secretary	Nanette Murphy	Rockhampton Grammar School, QLD
Treasurer	Anne George	Assisi Catholic College, QLD
Journal Editor	Judy Barbe	Toowoomba Catholic Education Office, QLD
Newsletter Editor	Christopher French	Whitsunday Anglican School, QLD
Online Manager	Junn Kato	Cavendish Road State High School, QLD
Ordinary member	Mary Campanella	Indooroopilly State High School, QLD
Ordinary member	Margaret Mulcahy	Santa Sabina College, NSW
Ordinary member	Debra Evans	Mt Alvernia College, QLD
Ordinary member	Scott Anderson	Burgmann Anglican College, ACT

SCHOOL FOCUS

Students reaching out and caring - a random act of kindness

Last term, I read an article from the newspaper about Maisie Cruickshank, a three year old girl who was diagnosed with leukemia. Maisie has been going through gruelling chemotherapy and still has another 18 months to go. My class was amazed at the positive, determined and happy attitude of Maisie. We talked about how often we feel as though we are hard done by in life but in reality others are doing it much tougher. We discussed how her parents would be dealing with their daughter's illness and the class decided they would like to do something positive and kind for the family. In their own time, students wrote letters and made Easter cards. We sent them off to the Royal Children's Hospital hoping they would get to her. We received an email from Maisie's mother thanking the class for their random act of kindness:

Dear Bradley

We received your letter and cards made by your students. Stephen and I were overwhelmed by this random act of kindness. The cards were beautiful. Maisie likes to look at them all the time. Thank you so much for facilitating such a lovely project, it had an enormous impact on our family and

on Maisie. It actually brings a tear to my eye just thinking about it. Maisie is making a card for your class and I hope to get it too you soon. If you like, I can bring her in to personally deliver. Maisie has a beautiful beaded necklace. All kids treated at the Children's have one and every time they have a procedure or chemo or are admitted to hospital they get a bead. They all mean different things. We could bring this in and show the class if they would like that? Otherwise I can send the card to you. Please let me know what you would prefer. Maisie is doing very well. She is on a lesser dose of chemo now so her hair is growing back and she doesn't get as sick. Thanks again Bradley, and please thank your students.

Elise Cruickshank



Elise brought Maisie over to meet the class. We put on a morning tea for her and the class sang Maisie a song called 'Reach'. The lyrics were very relevant and I could see Elise tearing up. In the following days, the class took it upon themselves to take up a collection and they purchased a signature bear, bracelet and book. We also framed a photo of the class and the gifts were presented to Maisie. The students have written exceptional reflective writing pieces about the whole experience. It is certainly going to be an experience the class will remember for many years to come.

Bradley Scott (Year 5/6 Teacher)
Strathmore Primary School
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USQ Faculty of Education MYSA Award

Congratulations Paula Schoutrop!!



Paula Schoutrop receiving her Bachelor of Education, Primary and Middle Schooling Award from Stephen Smith.

MYSA11: 7th International Conference Changing Curriculum, Challenging Times

Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre
 26 – 28 May 2011

Confirmed speakers include:

Art Costa - Peter Hill - Andrew Fuller - Archbishop Roger Herft

The initial brochure and Call for Abstracts will be distributed in July.



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Victoria

VACANT

Expressions of interest for Regional Coordinators' positions on the Sunshine Coast and in Victoria can be forwarded to the MYSA office.