



Walgett Community College High School

# GABA GAAY

'GOOD STORY'

Issue 3 | June 2022

Term 2 at Walgett Community College High School has seen a positive "buzz" developing around the school. There are now several programs running across the school which are contributing to Making School a Better Place. As you read on in this edition of the newsletter you will see what is happening with alternative learning opportunities, vocational tasters, a continuing focus on literacy and numeracy and staff and student wellbeing.

Student attendance continues to improve and in Term 2 the school has had the best attendance figures for the last 12 months.

Staff numbers and attendance has now stabilised. The school is fully staffed with one additional position above the usual allocation. Staff absenteeism has dropped significantly which has improved consistency for students in their learning and has allowed for a more stable student learning environment. The new staff who commenced at the school in Term 1 2022 have all settled in and are making a valuable contribution to the school community.



Work has also commenced to formally establish a Culture and Language Hub at the school. This work is being led by the School Reference Group supported by the Senior Project Officer, Liz O'Reilly. It is envisaged this space will be a place for resourcing, researching, and teaching local and regional Aboriginal culture and language, for the benefit of young people. We are very excited about the opportunity this will provide to really connect our school to the local community, and we look forward to working closely with our stakeholders to bring this vision to reality.

Across Term 2 the school has been supported by the Safeguarding Kids Together division of the Department of Education. Together we have been considering how best to address the priority areas of student wellbeing; staff wellbeing; attendance and supervision; anti-bullying, anti-racism, cyber-safety; and community engagement. I look forward to seeing the benefits from the plans we have developed in each of these areas.

Finally, in Term 2 in celebration of Anzac Day, I would like to thank and acknowledge partnering with the Dharriwaa Elders Group, Clem Dodd and Richard Lake in sharing their local knowledge and stories. We look forward to celebrating Sorry Day, NAIDOC Day and Reconciliation Week this term, with activities to better understand and acknowledge these important historical events.

Adam Batchelor  
Executive Principal

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## 2022 NAPLAN TESTING

The 2022 NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy) testing was conducted with Year 7 and Year 9 students in May. Students undertook four tests:

- writing
- reading
- grammar
- numeracy.

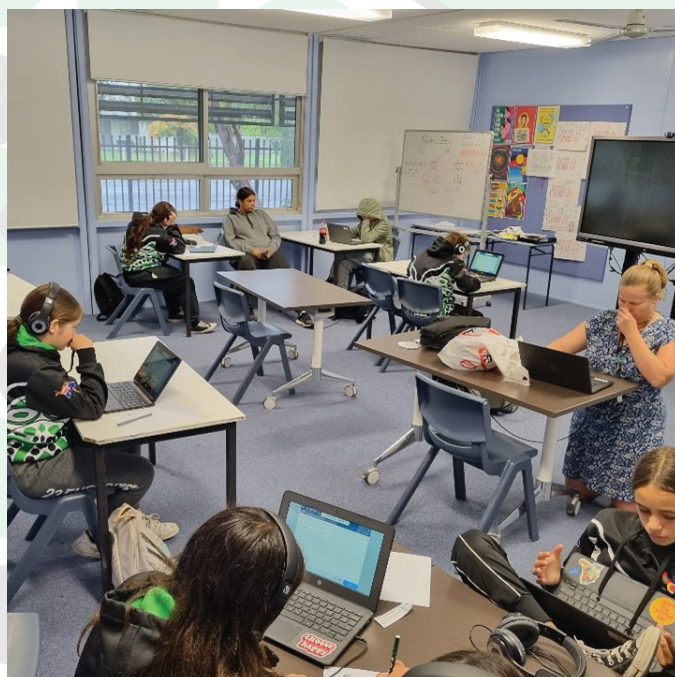
This year the NAPLAN assessment classes ran smoothly with students participating in a calm and positive manner. All testing was undertaken online, and this has the benefit of results being more quickly available for the school to use in adjusting our approach.

Results are provided to the school and are used with other available data to develop specific strategies for both individual students and the whole student cohort.

For Year 7 the NAPLAN data is considered with “Best Start” data, data from the ILSP (Intensive Learning Support Program), teacher observations and student class work to map the growth and development in literacy and numeracy skills.

For Year 9 students the NAPLAN data is considered with data from “Check in Assessments”, data from the ISLP, teacher observations and students’ class work to map the growth and development in literacy and numeracy skills.

Parents and caregivers also receive a copy of their child’s results.



2022 NAPLAN testing at WCC

## WELLBEING

*Making School a Better Place* identifies wellbeing as a key focus area. WCCHS has a commitment to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, and the wider community.

During Term 1 2022 the Wellbeing team developed a structured approach to Wellbeing lessons for the remainder of 2022.

 <b>WELLBEING</b> A commitment to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, and the wider community.					
Theme	Year 7 Focus	Year 8 Focus	Year 9 Focus	Year 10 Focus	Year 11 & 12 Focus
Term 2 2022 Culture	Sense of self – what are you proud of?	Interpersonal relationships – what does my culture look like today?	Social Connections and Community Focus	Cultural Safety & Self Governance	Cultural Leadership and how I represent myself to others
Stand Proud					
Term 3 2022 Mind and Body	Healthy Routines – nutrition & exercise	Making healthy choices and caring for my body	Feeling Good (mental health & body image)	Respecting self & respecting others (sexual health)	Cautionary Tales
Stay Healthy					
Term 4 2022 Behaviours	Be kind	Make your own choices (peer pressure / trust your gut)	Know who to trust (social media and drugs)	Respect others (Peers, community)	Make good choices (Understand pressure to make bad choices)
Choice Matters					

MAKING SCHOOL A BETTER PLACE

 **Walgett Community College High School**  
COURAGE AND EXCELLENCE

This framework is now being used for lessons on Wednesday afternoons for all Year 7 – 11 students.

Staff have had the opportunity in Term 2 to focus on their own wellbeing with the whole staff meeting on 10th May being dedicated to a wellbeing exercise and a staff breakfast being held on the 25th May. Breakfast was cooked by Beau Johnson, coffees served by Doug Grave and fruit and pastries provided by Walgett Newsagency. It was a great morning to build staff morale.



WCC staff enjoying the staff breakfast on 25.5.22



## STAFF INTRODUCTIONS



### SIDNEY AUSTIN

#### **What is your role on the Wellbeing Team?**

I am the Year 12 Adviser and I teach the Year 10 Wellbeing class

#### **What does Wellbeing mean to you?**

Wellbeing is about understanding oneself and understanding how our actions affect our lives whether they are positive or negative.

#### **What are you aiming to achieve in the Wellbeing lessons you present?**

Getting the students to self-regulate and getting them to understand what they can do to improve their lives inside of school.

#### **What do you like most about working at WCC High School?**

The best thing about working at WCC High School is the shared experience between teachers and their willingness to help each other.



### CARA-LEIGH KENNEDY

#### **What is the role of the AEO?**

The role of the AEO is to work closely with teachers to develop culturally appropriate resources and programs. I also promote Aboriginal education, encourage students, and support parents.

#### **What do you like most about working at WCC High School?**

The opportunity to help our kids particularly now, because they need a lot of support to keep them coming to school and to keep them engaged. Programs like Sista Speak allow me to interact with the students as a mentor and connect them to their culture.



### DEIDRE KENNEDY

#### **What is the role of the AEO?**

I work with community, students, and staff.

I help teachers with ideas of how they can engage. Good engagement is important so students know what they will need

to do, and I find worked examples work well in the classroom.

With students I build their self-esteem and encourage them to be in class.

With community I talk to parents and help them to communicate with the school. I want to see the community work with the school.

#### **What do you like most about working at WCC High School?**

I want to see kids succeed so they go further when they leave school so they succeed in life.



### ALEENA LUDKE

#### **What is your role on the Wellbeing Team?**

I am the Year 7 Adviser

#### **What does Wellbeing mean to you?**

Wellbeing means our students have opportunities to develop their friendships as well as family and community connections.

#### **What are you aiming to achieve with the Wellbeing lessons you present?**

I aim to support each student to achieve their own personal best. I am looking forward to establishing a school tradition of annual Year 7 school camps, beginning with 2022 Year 7 students.

#### **What do I like most about working at WCC High School?**

I like working collaboratively to plan future learning for our students where local cultural perspectives are embedded within the standard NSW curriculum material. I also like opening doors for their professional futures.



## BRONWYN WHITTON

### **What is your role on the Wellbeing Team?**

Year 10 & 11 Year Adviser

### **What does Wellbeing mean to you?**

Strong wellbeing means you can appreciate the good times and navigate tough situations with confidence.

### **What are you aiming to achieve in the Wellbeing lessons you present?**

I hope to create a sense of calm in the lesson and make time for reflection. I also aim to develop students' skills to deal with negative emotions.

### **What do you like most about working at WCC High School?**

The best thing about working at WCC High School is the students and their great sense of humour. Not a day goes by where they don't make me laugh.

## NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK ASSEMBLY

Friday morning 27th May, School Captain Azaria Dennis and Vice-Captain Janet Murphy hosted an assembly to mark the beginning of Reconciliation Week. Speeches focusing on this year's theme of Be Brave, Make Change were presented by School Captain Azaria Dennis, Executive Principal Mr Adam Batchelor, and Senior Project Officer Ms Liz O'Reilly. The flags were raised as the school sang Advance Australia Fair, with lyrics changed and written by Kutcha Edwards and Judith Durham. Also, on display in the garden outside the art and music rooms were hearts made by students in their Wellbeing lessons. Inside the hearts, students traced their hands and wrote statements that reflected what reconciliation means to them.



Reconciliation Week assembly

## AMS HEALTH CHECKS

Early in Term 2, WCCHS and Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS), worked together to support young people and the community by co-ordinating and delivering health checks for our students in the Community Hub at our school.

The aim of a health check is to enable the early detection of possible developing health conditions and chronic disease. The health checks covered aspects of health from measuring and monitoring blood pressure, blood glucose levels, weight, height, hearing and dental, as well as social and emotional wellbeing.

Forty students from WCCHS received a health care check from WAMS staff and this will help to identify individual health care needs and allow for follow-up with allied health providers or specialist health care professionals.

WCCHS is grateful for the continuing opportunity to partner with WAMS to provide best care and support for our students.



## ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORK – TAFE TASTER

With a focus on health in Term 2, students at WCCHS also had the opportunity to participate in a TAFE Taster on Aboriginal health work. Over a two-day period, interested students were able to attend a 2-hour workshop in our Wellbeing Hub with TAFE teacher, Wendy Moore. During these sessions, students were exposed to a variety of discussions relevant to Aboriginal health and investigated a range of career opportunities.

Wendy Moore, Teacher and Assessor, Aboriginal Health Work at TAFE NSW had the following to say: "I love doing this – having conversations with the students. Through our conversations, they get a better awareness of health and how having better health outcomes can save someone's life. By promoting knowledge of chronic disease and life expectancy you give ownership back to Aboriginal people. At the sessions, we also talked about career opportunities, and it was great to see some students are interested in careers in health as nurses and midwives."



## SALT WORKSHOPS

During Term 2, 23 girls from Years 7-12 participated in the Supporting and Linking Tradeswomen (SALT) workshop. This initiative is about inspiring female students to use basic hand tools and small power tools to develop confidence in thinking they can choose an apprenticeship as a future pathway option. SALT is determined to bring about social change by developing the basic knowledge of generic tool use, which are used in almost all trades. The girls had a lot of fun in the workshop and were provided with one-on-one support from a tradesperson. Each of the girls finished their caddy and were able to take it home that day.



## WALGETT FASHION WEEK

Walgett Fashion Week was presented across the whole community by Signal Creative in partnership with Outback Arts, Redi.E, Walgett Library, Moogahlin and the Community Working Party.



Before Covid, Signal Creative ran textile printing workshops in Walgett and the fabrics were printed and sewn up. Many of the female Elders and Walgett High School students who modelled the garments were involved in the original printing. Walgett Fashion Week was a celebration of this work and created new pieces to wear as well.

The WCC HS students made and modelled their own custom t-shirts and jewellery pieces made with Signal Creative. They looked fantastic.

As part of Walgett Community College High School's Wellbeing program, all the Walgett Community College High School female students were invited to attend Fashion Week at the Walgett PCYC. The activity was hosted by a local hair and makeup studio and was followed by lunch and sporting activities. Female students from Bourke High School also attended.

The artistic photo-shoot was designed to highlight both the beauty and strength of Aboriginal girls and women. Walgett Community College High School SLSO staff braided the girls' hair and a local makeup studio applied gold foil highlights over makeup. A local photography studio photographed the girls.

After the Fashion Week photography, the girls were provided with a delicious, nutritious lunch, delivered by the Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) team.

After the Fashion Week photo shoot, the girls joined together in exercises and a social basketball game. These activities supported their social, emotional, and physical wellbeing.

We appreciated the girls from Bourke making the long drive to Walgett, allowing opportunities for the girls from both schools to form new friendships and engage in social communication.

The Walgett girls have requested opportunities to maintain their newly formed friendships with the Bourke girls through ongoing social and sporting activities. The Wellbeing and Sports teams are preparing to initiate those ideas. Days such as this highlight the benefits of shared, positive, creative, and expressive opportunities and events.

## SORRY DAY MAY 26TH 2022 – COMMUNITY LUNCH

Years 7, 8 and 12 students from Walgett Community College High School attended a Sorry Day event at Walgett Shire Council. Also attending the flag raising ceremony were Years 5 and 6 students from Walgett Primary School alongside members of the community. After the event, everyone was invited to the high school, to sit together and have a hearty warming lunch of curries, rice and damper. The curries were prepared by Daniel Walford (WCCHS) and Doreen Peters (TAFE) and Mr See made a delicious damper. Students from Mrs Marks' Hospitality class helped to prepare and serve the lunch. Workers from community organisations, WAMS, REDi.e, Mission Australia, TAFE and the Shire Council also attended the lunch. Years 5 and 6 students from the primary school had time to meet up with their friends and family in high school, playing handball and sitting together in the playground. WCCHS hopes to host more community lunches in Term 3 and Term 4.





## ALTERNATE LEARNING AT WCCHS

Students in our Alternate Learning setting have been working hard across a range of areas of interest. The class, based at the Agriculture Farm, have worked to build a greenhouse, and have had opportunities to obtain the skills needed to operate machinery required to run a busy farm.

Students have been on Country, observing and measuring the levels of the Barwon and Namoi Rivers, discussing conservation regarding carp fish, and using that time to participate in fishing and yabbying.

This term, students have utilised the Hospitality learning space to gain experience making and distributing hot beverages to staff and students and have catered for their peers by preparing pizza.

The students have surveyed a new build site at the Agriculture Farm, measuring the perimeter and area to obtain quotes from local tradespeople in Walgett. We are looking forward to being hands-on in the new build that will facilitate a new learning space for these keen learners.



## PLANNING FOR CULTURE AND LANGUAGE HUB

As part of the WCCHS Making School a Better Place framework, work is now underway to embed local language and culture into the school. The School Reference Group (SRG) have commenced planning for using the Community Hub as a dedicated Culture and Language Hub. SRG members met with staff and leadership team representatives to discuss the purpose of the Culture and Language Hub, the programs which could run as part of the Culture and Language Hub, who needs to be involved and the priorities for 2022/23. Planning is now underway, and it is anticipated that the Culture and Language Hub will commence operation in Term 3 2022.

The Culture and Language Hub will be a place for resourcing, researching, and teaching local and regional Aboriginal culture and language for the benefit of young people.

The Culture and Language Hub will be established on the principles of:

- Respecting culture and language protocols, and everyone's knowledge and experience of language.
- Acknowledging the traditional ways of teaching and learning.
- Recognising that learning language plays a part in healing individuals and communities.
- Flexibility.
- Quality.
- Working in partnership with the community under the leadership of the School Reference Group.

The Culture and Language Hub will be a unique learning environment which celebrates Aboriginal culture and language by building cultural identity, community capability and self-determination.



SRG members and staff participating in planning for establishing a Culture and Language Hub at WCC HS

## SISTA SPEAK YEAR 9

Sista Speak is a program for young Aboriginal women, designed to assist participants in developing positive relationships, teaching them to respect themselves and others around them, and to be proud of their Aboriginal identity.

The first three weeks of this program for our Year 9 students have focused on social skills, listening to mentors, and thinking of others. Our AEO Cara Kennedy, and Jillian Gates, Samantha Sharpley and Liz O'Reilly have been organising and leading activities for the girls to think about their school attendance, their behaviour towards one another and what it is they want for the future.

A session at the Barwon Inn for lunch revolved around how to behave in public, examining positive personal qualities and identifying areas that students would like to improve. A trip to Brewarrina had the girls listening to mentors' speeches whilst having lunch at the Ngemba Thulli Café. This week, students worked with Mrs Marks in the Hospitality kitchen, making muffins to give to other people. Students have also practised giving each other compliments, talking nicely to one another, and sending cards of gratitude to inspirational women in their lives. More activities focusing on employment pathways and self-care are planned for the next few sessions.



Sista Speak participants at their first workshop