THE VIEW

The How and Why of Project Based Learning

How would you describe an ‘ideal’ Year 12 graduate? When this question was asked at a three-day training event earlier this year on Project Based Learning (PBL), teachers responded with characteristics such as: a problem solver, a critical and creative thinker, a collaborator, a communicator, confident, responsible... and the list went on. When I stop and think about it, I don’t only want to see these qualities in our Year 12 graduates, I want them for my children throughout all levels of their schooling.

In its simplest form, Project Based Learning is a method of teaching that uses projects to organise the curriculum. Students learn important academic content through well-designed projects by investigating questions, generating and evaluating solutions and producing products that demonstrate what they have learned. Project Based Learning provides greater opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, communication skills, creativity, collaboration skills and the ability to problem solve, amongst many other competencies.

Increasingly, students will have the opportunity to make some decisions about a project and have a greater voice in their learning, giving them greater ownership over it. Reflection is built into a well-designed project for both students and teachers to reflect on learning, the project itself, the quality of work, the effectiveness of their questioning and to determine the best way forward. Ongoing feedback is a key component as students give, receive and utilise the feedback to inform their learning. Throughout the PBL unit students are working on a product to share with people beyond the classroom, making their learning relevant to the real world.

Project Based Learning is not a panacea for all educational problems, but it motivates students, prepares them for college, university and careers, and develops them as global citizens. It helps students meet the curriculum content and do well on tests, especially where they are asked to demonstrate deep learning and show their thinking skills. It provides a platform for teachers to teach in a more motivating way, and it provides the school with new ways of communicating and connecting with parents, the wider community and the world.

We’re only just beginning the PBL journey and we’re excited to be focused on this student-centred method of learning and teaching. We’re working as part of a network of schools and further training will take place early next year with the view to having all teachers trained in PBL to ensure its quality in the classroom.

Nathan Hill
Leading Learning Team
SPORT

Term 3 Sport Uniform

Years K-2 – wear their sport uniform on Mondays and Wednesdays.
Years 3-6 – wear their sport uniform on Tuesdays and Fridays.

HRIS Athletics

Last week, the two day HRIS Athletics Carnivals were held at Glendale. Being in Division 1, Avondale School competed on Friday with the top 7 other schools. Our students achieved some excellent results with some achieving PBs and others breaking HRIS records. The overall best performing school was closely contested all day between Avondale School, Hunter Valley Grammar School and St Columba Anglican School. We can be proud of our very close second place!

Hunter Valley Grammar School 1532 pts
Avondale School 1520 pts
St Columba Anglican School 1506 pts

Congratulations to the following students who will be going to CIS Athletics State Championships in Sydney on Thursday, September 13:

Cooper S  8 Year 100m
Caitlin C  9 Year 100m, 200m, Long Jump
Mali T  10 Year High Jump
Sadie S  11 Year Discus
Hayden I  11 Year Shot Put
Harry K  11 Year Discus
Tegan C  12 Year Shot Put, Discus
Olivia M  12 Year 100m
Jess W  13 Year 100m
Bailey SM  13 Year 100m

Congratulations to the following students who broke HRIS records:

Tegan C  12 Year Shot Put, Javelin
Sophie LG  12 Year Javelin
Harry K  11 Year Javelin
Josiah G  10 Year Javelin
Ameeka C  10 Yr Javelin
Jess W  13 Yr 100m

Newcastle One Day Chess Competition

Monday, August 27
Fifteen students will be competing in the Newcastle One Day Chess Competition on Monday, August 27. Our School won this competition last year and we expect to perform well this year. Parents are encouraged to give some practice time over the weekend.

ACT Mountain Biking Championships

The Primary School will have two Mountain Biking teams heading off to Canberra next week for this special annual event. They will be joining several Secondary teams. Team 1: Eli R, Ryan M, Caleb M. Team 2: Kai C, Sai R, Rhys MP.

Southlakes Athletics Club

If you would like your child to have the great experience of learning how to perform better, you might be interested in joining a Little Athletics Club. Please see Mr Head for a promotional flier regarding our local Little Athletics Club. Registration is next week.

CLASS

Avondale School Newsletter
HRIS Stage 4 Science and Technology Challenge

Friday, August 17 saw a group of 24 excited Year 7 and 8 students head to Lakes Grammar School for the inaugural HRIS Stage 4 Science and Technology Challenge competing against six other schools. A day full of designing, testing, improving and more testing followed. Our students exhibited plenty of 21st Century skills, including collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, along with an impressive share of persistence and resilience. From cake decorating to model furniture design, bottle rockets to model aircraft, our team did us proud with their attitude and performance. The climax to the day was the testing of the model aircraft in one-on-one battle in a dogfight in front of over 150 people. Matthew G was a magnificent pilot winning three knockout battles to emerge as the victor in the grand final! In the end Avondale School was second overall for the day after winning a number of individual events.

ICAS Science Competition

Distinction Awardees: Cassandra S, Poppy M, Gemma L, Oliver C, Ty D, Jared C, Aidan C, Liam B, Byron R, Henry H. Jared C also received the Principal’s Award for the competition. Well done students!

STEP UP

3.30 - 4.30 PM THURSDAYS in the iCentre

A chance to:
» do independent study
» complete your homework
» get some help with writing (just sorting that essay out!)
» get some help with maths (even that tricky homework question!)
» get some guidance on that assessment task you need to start!

Power Outage This Weekend

Please note that the school will have no power this Sunday, August 26 due to AusGrid’s planned power outage. From late Saturday evening all ICT services will be powered down in readiness and won’t return to service until late Sunday or early Monday. This will mean Landscape will be unavailable from possibly Saturday evening until Monday morning so students need to download anything they might need beforehand.

MAD Night

Senior Music Art Drama (MAD) Night will take place at 6pm, 13 September in the Collaborative Learning Centre (CLC). Enjoy an evening of entertainment while checking out some of the artistic work of our senior students. Hospitality students will be providing catering. Free Admission.

YEAR 12 HSC MUSIC STUDENTS LIVE

AT LIZOTTE’S!

Tuesday 28 August at 7pm*
Cost $15 per person
Doors open at 6pm*
Book online to support our students

HRIS Stage 4 Science and Technology Challenge

Friday, August 17 saw a group of 24 excited Year 7 and 8 students head to Lakes Grammar School for the inaugural HRIS Stage 4 Science and Technology Challenge competing against six other schools. A day full of designing, testing, improving and more testing followed. Our students exhibited plenty of 21st Century skills, including collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, along with an impressive share of persistence and resilience. From cake decorating to model furniture design, bottle rockets to model aircraft, our team did us proud with their attitude and performance. The climax to the day was the testing of the model aircraft in one-on-one battle in a dogfight in front of over 150 people. Matthew G was a magnificent pilot winning three knockout battles to emerge as the victor in the grand final! In the end Avondale School was second overall for the day after winning a number of individual events.

ICAS Science Competition

Distinction Awardees: Cassandra S, Poppy M, Gemma L, Oliver C, Ty D, Jared C, Aidan C, Liam B, Byron R, Henry H. Jared C also received the Principal’s Award for the competition. Well done students!

STEP UP

3.30 - 4.30 PM THURSDAYS in the iCentre

A chance to:
» do independent study
» complete your homework
» get some help with writing (just sorting that essay out!)
» get some help with maths (even that tricky homework question!)
» get some guidance on that assessment task you need to start!

Power Outage This Weekend

Please note that the school will have no power this Sunday, August 26 due to AusGrid’s planned power outage. From late Saturday evening all ICT services will be powered down in readiness and won’t return to service until late Sunday or early Monday. This will mean Landscape will be unavailable from possibly Saturday evening until Monday morning so students need to download anything they might need beforehand.

MAD Night

Senior Music Art Drama (MAD) Night will take place at 6pm, 13 September in the Collaborative Learning Centre (CLC). Enjoy an evening of entertainment while checking out some of the artistic work of our senior students. Hospitality students will be providing catering. Free Admission.

YEAR 12 HSC MUSIC STUDENTS LIVE

AT LIZOTTE’S!

Tuesday 28 August at 7pm*
Cost $15 per person
Doors open at 6pm*
Book online to support our students
K-6 Book Week

Book Week has been a wonderful week of fun! The Find Your Treasure competition entries are on display in the library for the next couple of weeks so come and have a look. Prizes will be awarded to selected students in all K-6 Year Levels at assembly this coming Monday, August 27.

This week we had a Words of Treasure competition with students colouring in pages with treasured words from the Bible. Prizes for this competition will also be awarded to selected students in all K-6 Year Levels at this Monday’s assembly and winners from both competitions will be listed in next week’s Newsletter.

Our super storytellers were in the library at lunchtimes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday this week. Mrs Battle, Dr A Faull and Mr Stuart Clark enthralled us with stories about treasure and we really enjoyed listening to them. We have been blessed to have the use of a 9m pirate ship in our foyer this week. Our thanks go to Mr George Norris who designed and built this ship, was willing to spend hours bringing it to the School and assembled it here with the able assistance of Mr Phil Lindsay and Mr Reg Litster and their wives. Many thanks to them for their efforts. Our students have loved exploring it and many classes have ended up spending time reading and having classes in it this week.

Books for Cambodia

As part of Book Week this year we’d love you to donate new or good second-hand books for a village school in Cambodia that needs library books. We have a ‘treasure chest’ in the library where students can put these donated books and it’s been great to see that the treasure chest is full! We will continue collecting books for Cambodia after Book Week has finished. How many times will we be able to fill the treasure chest with books for the Cambodian children to treasure?

Years 7-12 Book Week

Our annual Secondary Quizzical Book Trivia competition was held on Tuesday, August 21. The room was absolutely jammed with 12 teams of students competing for spot prizes and the grand prize of $100 for each division. Competition was intense and the scores were close but the eventual division winners were as follows: Senior - Zali, Elia, Vanessa, Megan and Tanya (Year 11); Junior - Grace, Byron, Olivia, Ben and Lara (Year 9). Both teams will now represent Avondale School as we compete against our sister schools in the annual Battle of the Books Competition on Monday, September 3.

We have also had lots of entries in our Book Face Competition which is open to students in Years 5-12. Students have to integrate themselves with a book cover to come up with a composite picture. Prizes for this competition will be awarded next week. It will be a tough one to judge with so many excellent entries.

K-9 PRC

Please remember that all completed PRC reading record sheets need to be returned to the library by next Friday August 31, one week from today! Enjoy your last-minute reading.

Colour Run Postponed

We regret to inform you that we have had to postpone our Colour for Cambodia event, scheduled for 26 August, due to just being informed last week of an AusGrid power outage scheduled for that same day. We were only notified about this on Wednesday last week, and despite our best efforts, the date was unable to be changed. We legally cannot have people on our school site without power to the entire school as many things need to be operational for the campus to be safe, not to mention we wouldn’t be able to have the activities planned at the event as well. We are looking at an alternative date at the moment. However, if the change of date (when confirmed) does not work for those that have pre-booked, we are more than happy to refund you. We understand this is super inconvenient, especially for the students who fundraised as they were looking forward to the day, and for helping the Year 12s with their mission trip. Sometimes these circumstances are out of our control. We will communicate accordingly with updated information as it becomes available. Thank you for your support and sorry for the inconvenience.

Position Available

We would like to invite applications for the position of Hospitality/Food Technology Kitchen Assistant. The position will be for 13.5 hours per week and would be a temporary position for the remainder of the school year. Desirable knowledge would be food handling and/or a Food Safety Supervisor’s Certificate or experience in a similar role.

Job descriptions are available from the Business Manager at fsaville@avondaleschool.nsw.edu.au. Applications close September 3 at 3.00pm.