Welcome to LSC’s inaugural addition of ‘Curriculum News’. This circular will be sent home midterm to let you know what is ‘going on’ in Year 7 classrooms across all our key learning areas. Please feel free to contact me at the school if you have any queries.
Kaylene Kubeil, Middle Years Curriculum Leader

**ENGLISH** – In English, students have completed their NAPLAN assessments and their study of their first literary text ‘Boy Overboard’. They are now investigating the role media plays in society with the specific focus on newspapers. They will be expected to present an oral on a current issue in class. Students will then continue with developing an understanding and evaluation of fairytales, concluding with composing their own fairytale for their writing folio.

**ESL (ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)** – As an introduction to ESL, all Year 7 ESL students were invited to attend the ESL lunch, where they were able to meet their teachers and ESL students from all year levels. Students contributed food to share and the variety of food was fantastic. In ESL classes students study and respond to spoken, written and visual texts. This semester students wrote a time capsule which was presented orally to the rest of the class. They have also read ‘Boy Overboard’ and completed an assignment where they had the choice of a brochure, postcard, and letter to the government, or a poem. Later this term students will focus on a ‘fairytale’ unit where they will study fairytales from around the world.

**EDUCATION SUPPORT** – The students who undertake the Educational Support classes have been working on a range of literacy based initiatives in order to improve their learning outcomes. Students began the semester by engaging in the Herald Sun newspapers. The newspaper related activities enabled students to develop literacy skills on a range of topics. Understanding the conventions of English has been a major focus. Students have completed creative writing tasks that focussed on sentence structure, vocabulary and grammar. Reading short pieces of text for comprehension required students to compose written responses as well as exploring their own ideas from the given material. Students will complete the semester by focussing on their speaking skills on a selected subject matter.

**MATHS** - This term in Mathematics, Year 7 students will learn about different types of measurement and different types of shapes. They will revise units of measurement and learn how these are used to calculate perimeter, area, volume and capacity. To assess their understanding students will be completing a measurement project in class. Students will then be learning about coordinates and translation. This topic includes the concepts of symmetry, translation, reflection as well as grid references and the cartesian plane. Students will also explore linear relationships and patterns. This will be assessed by a test at the end of the topic.

**NUMERACY SUPPORT** – Numeracy support is a new initiative which began Term 2. Students are practising their times tables during the first 5 minutes of each lesson and graphing their progress. They will move through the levels of tables where accuracy and speed determine progress to the next level. Practise at home is recommended. Rather than the usual topic based curriculum, students are learning about
decimals, measurements and area through the re-decorating of their classroom. In this way, students are able to see the value of mathematical skills. Skill development is reinforced through ICT use on a regular basis.

**SCIENCE** – This semester has seen Year 7’s learn the safety rules of a laboratory and how science uses experiments to ask and answer questions. Students have studied the difference between solids, liquids and gases and how scientific models have helped us understand their properties. These models have been reinforced with the use of practical work. Following this, students studied the topic of mixtures where all students completed a ‘Milo Project’ which helped show students real life application of scientific terminology: solutions, mixtures, suspensions and colloids. All topics have had strong emphasis of safety in science. At the beginning of Term 2, students were also lucky enough to participate in education week with a presentation from the CSIRO on sports science. Students investigated many aspects of sport science with various practicals including looking at chicken wing muscles, reaction rates and advances in sport drinks. Midway through Term 2 students will learn about renewable and non-renewable resources and the advances Chemistry has made to allowing us to maintain our way of life, through a production called Rain Reaction. This complimented the topic of mixtures where students learnt about the importance of saving water and how we recycle this invaluable resource.

**HUMANITIES** – This semester the students are studying Geography and the topic they have covered this term so far is Rainforests. They have completed an assignment for this topic. Antarctica is the next topic and students will be assessed through a test. The topics which follow after Antarctica are Deserts and Environmental issues. The last area may also have been studied alongside Rainforests, Antarctica and Deserts: as all three topics have environmental issues as part of their study.

**HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION** – The practical sports that all classes will be involved in this term will be Softball, Netball, and Fitness. In all of these activities there is a strong emphasis on the skills of hand-eye coordination, timing, general physical health as well as game rules, tactics and strategies such as offensive and defensive plays. Dance is also key part of the program. The theme is ‘Hip Hop’. Dance has many benefits such as improved muscle tone and strength, increase in coordination and flexibility, improved balance, greater self-confidence and finally improving social skills. In the theory classes students will be continuing to work through their ‘flexi-books’ and will be covering the unit of ‘changing and growing’. This will look at topics such as hormones, growth, development and nutrition. Health resources and organisations will also be covered.

**SPORT** - In Sport this term, students will continue to be involved in the VSSSA sports which are the required sports that we are involved in for interschool competitions. This is in preparation to compete against other local schools in their chosen sport. The sports for this term Netball, Football, Badminton and Soccer. Students will participate in skill based activities, knowledge of the game as well as the further development of team work, game strategies and tactics. In these classes, teachers are more like ‘coaches’ and everyone is expected to participate maximally to the best of their ability.

**ART** - The theme for Term 2 is ABORIGINAL XRAY ART – PRINTMAKING. Students are introduced to early examples of Aboriginal X-ray Art. They analyse art elements and principles, meanings and symbols. They learn how to recognise and name different marks and lines used to create texture. Students complete a Research Assignment where they examine, research and draw different animal skeletal systems and their structures in their visual diary. Students are to complete a newspaper article that analyses the work of a selected Aboriginal Artwork. They are introduced to printmaking vocabulary and begin using terminology to analyse their own work through annotation. The final artwork is an edition of prints using scratch foam in the X-ray style presented in their visual diary.

‘A Time to Change’
MUSIC - In Music, students learn how to play the keyboard. They cover basic keyboard skills and learn songs using both their right and left hand. Throughout the semester, students cover the topic of instruments of the orchestra which ties into their assignment. The Year 7 assignment is ‘Making an Instrument’ which is creative and practical. In theory classes students are able to learn basic theory which enables them to read music.

LOTE - Many Year 7 students are studying a Language Other Than English for the very first time. It has been a positive start to the year with exciting activities planned for the rest of 2011. The French classes celebrated their first term achievements with Ms. Tatray. One of the topics they will be covering this term will be “The Family”. Some students will also be competing in the Alliance Francaise poetry competition. After Easter celebrations, Ms. Sakellaris’ Greek students completed a multi-media presentation on Greece. They have been learning to tell the time and the next topic is also about the family. The Italian classes taught by Ms. Defazio and Ms. Sofo are covering the topic of “Personal Identity.” Students will learn how to describe themselves in their new language using numbers and adjectives. Activities include power point presentations and letter writing. The topic for the Macedonian class is “The Weather”. Using the new vocabulary students will write up a weather diary for Macedonia. Ms. Popovska is also planning a “Burek Day” where traditional spinach, cheese or meat pastries may be sampled. In preparation for mid-year assessment, students will complete a variety of oral, reading, writing, and cultural tasks, so they need to remember to consistently study new material so that they can prepare themselves for these tests. I wish all students the best of luck.

FOOD TECHNOLOGY – This term in our food classes, we will be continuing to practise our safe and hygienic food behaviours whilst in the kitchens during the practical classes. The students will have a strong focus on ‘healthy foods’ for good nutrition including fruits, vegetables, grains and cereals. In the theory classes we will continue with this theme of ‘healthy’ and specifically look at the aspects of food values, classification, purchasing, preparation and storage.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY – In Design and Technology, the year seven students have been working on the production of a ‘spice rack’. This has been documented in each students log book that they are required to keep up to date. The students have looked at timber, the various tools, other materials needed, design, assembly and finally the sanding and varnishing. Throughout its construction, safety is essential. Students will move onto a small metalwork project - a pencil holder. They will draw the plans in their books, ensuring that the dimensions are accurate and mark out their material for cutting, folding and assembling.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (ICT) – Although we do not have a separate subject as such, ICT is being integrated into some subjects each semester so students get an opportunity to use and develop their current skills. We aim to provide students with opportunities to develop skills. Some activities conducted are: presentations, filming, online blogs and producing documents.

LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTRE - Lalor Secondary College is registered to participate in the annual Victorian Premier’s Reading Challenge (VPRC). In this challenge, the Premier Ted Ballieu is inviting students to read 15 books from a list of approved reading books. The Library Resource Centre has most of these books. We are encouraging Year 7 students to participate in this fun and worthwhile program. Many students have chosen to take up the challenge to read 15 books by 15th September 2011. The registered students will be notified of their username and password to enable them to manage their reading list on the VPRC’s website. Over the next few weeks, the registered students will be shown how the VPRC website works. Whether your child is participating in the VPRC or not, please encourage your child to read at home. We have fantastic new books available in the library.
It’s no secret that students benefit from doing homework regularly, but how can you help motivate your child to put in those extra hours at home? From developing organisational skills, time management and self-discipline, to making the most of out-of-school resources, and personal responsibility for learning, these homework tips and tricks can help your child stay on track.

**Schedule daily homework time** - Establish a regular time of day for the completion of homework that fits in with your family routine and suits your children. Consider that some kids really need some ‘down time’ when they first get home from school so having homework time as soon as they walk in the door may be counterproductive. Try to build into the routine something they enjoy doing at the end of their homework time as an incentive to get it done. If there is a lot of homework then there may be the need for a short break in the middle to maintain their focus.

**Reduce distractions** - Turn off the TV, make sure siblings are not engaged in distracting activities close by and have a clutter-free area for your child to work in.

**Be available** - Stay close by when your children are doing their homework so you can help interpret questions and explain the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Rather than send them into their bedroom to do their work, set your child up in a more public space. You might sit nearby and use this time to complete some of your own “homework” like paying bills or reading correspondence so that you are modelling the importance of completing work, all the time being right there to help when needed. Showing an interest in the work demonstrates that you value the homework and you want to support your child’s achievement at school.

**Help them get organised** - Work with your child to develop some good systems of organisation. This might include teaching them how to use a diary effectively or developing a habit of putting completed homework straight into their school bag ready for the next day.

**Be encouraging** - Help your child develop a “can-do” attitude with positive self-talk. Recognise their efforts and celebrate their achievements. Encouragement will get you much further than nagging ever could.

**Stay calm** - We all know how frustrating homework time can be but it is very important to remain calm. A stressed child will not learn. If it all gets too much then take some time out and return to it at a later time. If homework is a regular source of anxiety for your child then you really need to talk to their teacher about it. Remember the goal is to develop positive study habits and a nightly battle will not achieve that.

**MIDDLE YEARS LEADERS:**

- English – I. Fatouros, ESL – R. Medcalf
- Education Support - R. Saltmarsh, Maths – E. Sawyer
- Science – A. Lister, Humanities – M. Tsolakidis
- Arts – L. Markovska, HPE – N. Salerno, Sport – L. Gannon
- ICT – M. Soni, Technologies – S. Devenish, LOTE- A. Anagnostou
- & Library Resource Centre – S. Graetsch