Dear Parents,

**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN N.S.W. INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

A recent analysis has found students in NSW Independent schools participating in the OECD’s Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) achieve results that rank them among the best-performing school systems in the world. Released by the AISNSW Institute, the analysis - ‘Academic Achievement in NSW Independent Schools’ - undertaken by Dr Gary Marks of the Australian Catholic University, shows that NSW Independent school students scored significantly higher than the national and state average in the 2012 PISA (the latest available) assessments in mathematical literacy.

Chair of the AISNSW Institute, Bill Daniels, said the analysis demonstrates that a significant part of the Australian schooling system is getting things right in terms of helping students to achieve their best, and also counters widely-held perceptions that the decline in the performance of Australian students in international assessments over the past ten years is uniformly reflected across all school jurisdictions.

The mean scores from the 2012 PISA assessments saw the NSW Independent schools sector ranked competitively with the top Asian countries/jurisdictions and Finland, all of which are frequently cited as benchmarks in international student assessments.

I believe more importantly, the analysis also showed that socioeconomic status and family background typically explained only a small part of the variation in student achievement, contrary to common perceptions that these were very strongly linked. The fact that two-thirds of Independent schools in NSW have a socioeconomic score in the lower half of the SES scale, shows that it is parents’ education levels and the value they place on education, along with school and teacher quality are the strongest defining factors.

I like to share some of the main quotes that have appeared in the summary report of this research.

**FEDERAL ELECTION & SCHOOL FUNDING**

With the Federal Election coming up, it is incumbent on each of us as voting citizens to be fully informed of the various parties education policies. Education funding is set to be one of the critical discriminating elements in the election campaign. Did you know, for example, that while the federal government heavily supports school education, nearly a third of Independent school education costs are met by parents? In addition to this, each child in an Independent school receives, on average, around $4000 less funding than a child in a government school. That is to say, it saves the Australian taxpayer a huge amount of money to have strong and reliable Independent schools. This is a simple fact that is often forgotten in the rhetoric that is spun about school education. There is much more to be said and argued about the value of schools such as ours and the issue of school choice, but these and other education debates are matters which I leave to you to develop your own thinking through informed reflection.

MANOUG DEMIRJIAN

10th June, 2016
DATES TO REMEMBER
13/06 Queen’s Birthday - Public Holiday
14/06 ICAS - Writing Test Years 3-6
15/06 ICAS - Spelling Test Years 3-6
‘Friendship Day’ @ Kinma School
22/06 Interschool Debating Comp. # 3
24/06 School Photos - Winter Uniform
Student Half Yearly Reports - Sent Out
01/07 Last Day Term 2 - Mufti Day
18/07 School Development Day (Pupil Free)
19/07 First Day Term 3 - Students Return
27/07 Interschool Debating Comp. # Final
13/11 Armenian Cultural Day
11/12 Christmas Concert and Graduation

TEACHERS’ AWARD
TERM 2 – WEEK 7
Year 6: Matthew Samuel
Year 5: Kevork Lara
Year 3: Zabel Asbed
Year 2: Sara Elizabeth Lara Stephen
- Remember -
5 Teachers’ Award = 1 Honour Award

ARMENIAN STUDENT FUND
WEEKLY REPORT: Term 2 Week 7
8 Points – SEVAN .......... $12.10
6 Points – YEREVAN .......... $9.45
TOTAL: .......... $21.55
ACCUMULATED: .......... $310.50

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DONATIONS TO ALEXANDER SCHOOL
In Support of the School’s Ipad Program
Mr & Mrs Ara and Annette Galstian $305

AGBU Alexander Primary School welcomes your donation and those of our community members. Donations can also be made in lieu of gift-giving occasions or for memorials.
All donations to the School Building Fund are tax deductible.

HOUSE POINTS TERM 2
Uniform, Playground, Charity & Awards
SEVAN - 82 points
YEREVAN - 81 points

SPONSOR A CHILD IN ARMENIA THROUGH THE ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH
8 Points – SEVAN .......... $12.10
6 Points – YEREVAN .......... $9.45
TOTAL: .......... $21.55
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2 Debates - 1 Loss & 1 Win

The Forest District Interschool Debating Competition’s first round of debates took place on Wednesday, 18th May at Alexander school. In our first debate we opposed the John Colet School. The topic was ‘Laptops and tablets should be banned from the main primary classroom’, and we were on the negative team. The negative team consisted of Lilit as first speaker, Talia as second speaker, Matthew as third speaker and Kevork was fourth speaker. Samuel took care of the time keeping and Lara was the chairperson.

Our team was able to use strong arguments and well thought out rebuts, as to why laptops should not be banned from the primary classrooms. They spoke with confidence and did their best to convince the adjudicators. Unfortunately they were unsuccessful against a formidable team and came out second best.

On Wednesday, 8th June, the John Colet School hosted the second round of debates. The topic was ‘Science is more important than Art’. We were on the affirmative and our opponents were the German school as the negative. Our team consisted of Christopher as first speaker, Matthew as second speaker, Talia as third and Samuel was fourth speakers.

Christopher started his case by defining the topic and putting forward a strong case line that “Science is a need, were as Art is a want”. He used strong arguments and outlined numerous examples over the use of science in our everyday lives and how the world will be a different place for us without science.

Second speaker Matthew was there and ready to rebut many of the points that the affirmative team put forward. He went on to inform us about the benefits of science and how it ‘brings art to life’. He argued that in order to enjoy art, one needs to have science first. An artist is unable to create a painting without paint or a brush, both products of science.

Talia, our third speaker came out strong with a number of rebuts on the points the opposition had raised and summed up her team’s case. Samuel was our fourth speaker. His role was to help with any rebuts if needed and to thank the adjudicators for rewarding us the win! He also thanked the German school for a challenging debate and the John Colet school for hosting the event.

We like to take this opportunity and congratulate all the students for their effort so far. It is great team work, as every member of class contributes to the process. Special thank you to our Library Coordinator, Mrs Armine Sevazlian for her guidance and support of the students in developing their case.

Our next debate is on Wednesday, 22nd June, against the Japanese school. Good luck debaters!

THANK YOU...

On behalf of Alexander School we like to say a big Thank You to:
Mr Micheal Taylor & Mrs Vicky Dernee
for helping us introduce three new Apple iPads into the classrooms.
We also like to acknowledge the support and service of:
Mr & Mrs Ara and Annette Galstian
for making this happen.

Thank You for supporting AGBU Alexander Primary School.
His Grace Bishop Haigazoun Najarian
Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church
of Australia and New Zealand
invites you to a special presentation from
the Hon. Greg Donnelly MLC

Marriage: Changing the Definition and its
Consequences

The Hon. Greg Donnelly MLC is a member of the NSW
Legislative Council. He sits on the Joint House
Committee on Children and Young People and is Deputy
Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Issues. He is
also Deputy Opposition Whip.

Greg’s policy areas of interest include family and life
issues, children and young people, media, employment
and workplace relations, human rights, biotechnology,
palliative care and education.

DATE: Friday, 17th June 2016
TIME: 7:00pm
VENUE: Armenian Apostolic Church of Holy Resurrection
ADDRESS: 10 Macquarie Street, Chatswood

For further information please contact Nishan Basmajian on
nishanbasmajian@gmail.com, (02) 9419 9056 or 0413 361 296

DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

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