



# BTA NEWS

Better Together Alliance Newsletter  
prepared by Sandy Gunn

November 2016

## Better Together Alliance

Great things happened across the BTA during November with more to come moving into December and the new year. In the meantime, planning and organisation continues to bring together future ongoing breakthrough events, programs and activities for the BTA schools in 2017.



### Virtual Classrooms

On Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November, the BTA engaged the expertise of Gary Schultz (Virtual Learning Project Officer – Learning and Teaching Branch) and Jenny Ashby (Virtual Learning Coach for NEVR) to investigate the introduction of Virtual Classrooms across the BTA schools in 2017. After two days of investigation and trialing the technology, two teachers will conduct Virtual Classes, on Wednesdays, in two subjects. Thank you to Gary Warner (SHS) and Gallina McKenzie (WPSC) for their willingness to trial this innovative project with their classes and to Nathan Hanns (WPSC) and Karlie McGrath (SHS) for being the important support colleagues in this trial. A review will be conducted at the end of Term I. Hopefully the introduction of this technology will address the issues of travel between schools. Thank you in advance to the students from WPSC, SHS and McGuire College for their persistence and commitment to using this technology.

*“We will do better for young people by working strategically together”*  
BTA Focus

### Induction Day

Feedback earlier this year from students, who travel to complete subjects at another Better Together Alliance school, indicated that they would like to have an induction session at their new host school.

The BTA Induction day was conducted on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November in preparation for the start of 2017. Students spent about an hour at their new host school and were provided with important information about attending their host school in 2017 including ICT, Code of Conduct, Tour, and the signing of a Student Agreement. The induction process gave students an opportunity to meet and talk with other students and alleviate some of the worry about moving between the BTA schools to complete their studies.



### Upcoming Events

- Cybersafety Sessions – Nov 24<sup>th</sup> – Dec 8<sup>th</sup>
- Cultural Days – 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Dec
- Transition Scoping and Planning – 7<sup>th</sup> Dec
- Community Forums – Term I 2017 (Cybersafety)
- BTA Production Auditions – Term I 2017



## Opportunities Ahead

Year 9 Dookie Camp – Planning is continuing for the opportunity to offer an agricultural link camp to Year 9s in the future. Mooroopna Secondary College are involved in the current planning to trial the camp for March 2017. Thank you to MSC for their eagerness to turn this into a positive ongoing option for the BTA. Thankyou to Lighthouse Project and Melbourne University for the chance to make this happen.



### BTA Production

On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November, 215 students from across the Better Together Alliance schools all met at Shepparton High School for the launch of the BTA Production 2017. Students enjoyed activities around 'Grease' and worked well as a large group with Laura (Director) and production staff from across the schools. **Auditions** will be conducted in **Week II of Term I 2017** at each of the schools. This exciting BTA Production will be performed in July 2017.



## Network Meetings

The Network Meetings for Term IV were led by McGuire College and held in the first week of November. Thank you McGuire College for your leadership and for the teacher feedback in these meetings. There is still work to do around these meetings and getting the processes right for all involved. The first meeting for 2017 will be led by Shepparton High School in Week 5 of Term I.



*The benefits of collaboration recognises not just in the sharing of goods but in their creation too.”*  
(Smith, 2015)

## BTA Community Forums

Discussions with individuals across the Better Together Alliance Schools and with community groups identified some important issues that impact our youth across Greater Shepparton. The proposal to address some of these issues is to conduct a BTA Community Forum once a term, where students, staff, parents and community members can gain access to expert advice from guest presenters on a range of issues. The first Community Forum will focus on Digital Citizenship (CyberSafety). The BTA has engaged the services of Susan McLean (top Australian expert in CyberSafety). This event will be held on **March 14<sup>th</sup> 2017**.

## Cultural Tours

Thanks to the outstanding partnership the BTA has with the Lighthouse Project, a two day program for the BTA schools in their end of year programs has been offered for the **8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of December**. Students will visit different cultural communities and spend time hearing about different cultural groups in Greater Shepparton. The program has 200 student participants signed up and looking forward to the experience. A big thank you to the Lighthouse Project.



## The Australian Ballet Out There Program

I am excited to report that in meeting with the Australian Ballet following our successful Out There Program in 2016, the BTA has now secured a 3 year partnership for the *Out There Program* here in Shepparton.

As a part of this new partnership, the program will be extended to a trip to Melbourne to see behind the scenes and to see a full performance, extending the experience to expose students to careers behind the scenes and not just being on the stage!!!

The BTA is also now in discussions with The Australian Ballet about a project involving the professional filming of the Out There program in Shepparton to promote their work in regional centres.

**facebook.**

[www.facebook.com/BetterTogetherAlliance](http://www.facebook.com/BetterTogetherAlliance)

The Better Together Alliance Facebook page was launched on the 1st of November. This social media page includes updates on events, activities and items across the BTA.

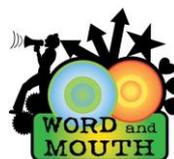
## Celebrating Success

### BTA Student Council

The BTA Student Council's first event for 2017 will be a joint casual clothes day that will raise funds for the Lift Off Scholarships program. (Community Fund) in Term 1.

### Cybersafety Sessions

Young people have access to a virtually limitless world. Understanding digital citizenship, at all levels, is about understanding their confident and positive engagement with digital technology. Students require skills and understanding of being a good digital citizen, one who has the skills and knowledge to effectively use digital technologies to positively participate in society, communicate with others, stay safe, and create and consume digital content. Online interactions are becoming part of the norm for our world. Therefore for young people, learning how to manage online relationships, treating people with respect online, and being a good and safe digital citizen is important. Currently 15 Cybersafety Sessions are being conducted across the Better Together Alliance and additionally at GVGS and Notre Dame through a partnership of BTA and Word and Mouth. The sessions include a panel discussion around the following topics: Definition, Cyberbullying, Sexting, Tagging and inappropriate photos in regards to employment, The law, and Staying Safe Online.



# Celebrating Success con...



## Year 7 Lighthouse Mentoring Program

A number of Mentors and Mentees met on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November at the Woolshed and cooked a meal for themselves and the Mentee's families. The Mentors and Mentees spent time cooking a great Spaghetti Bolognese and a delicious chocolate cake with hot fudge sauce. A huge thankyou goes out to Ange and Anthony for their time and expertise in teaching us the skills in the kitchen and thank you to Ange and Cam Mangiameli for the donation not only of Ange's time and expertise but the use of their venue and the ingredients for this event to occur. Both Mentors and Mentees had a great night!

With the end of the year approaching, the majority of the mentees and mentors have committed to continuing with their connection through to next year. Thank you to Lighthouse Project for their continued support for this program and the plan to expand is across the BTA Schools. Some feedback has been collected about the Lighthouse Mentoring Program from the current Mentees below:

*'Thank you for making this program. It is actually a great idea. I spent a lot of time with my mentor.'*

*'Thank you for starting this program. It's a really fun opportunity to be having a mentor. I would recommend this program to continue for many years.'*

*'I really enjoyed this program and I think everyone should want to be in this program. It's a great support.'*

*'I would really recommend this to the Year 7s next year because my mentor has helped me through a lot this year with school and other things. I want to continue in the program next year. Thank you.'*

*'Thanks for electing me to have a mentor, it has helped me a lot and my mentor is really supportive of my health and well-being. If I ever need help she's there to help me so I would definitely recommend this program for all of the Year 7s next year. Thank you.'*

*'Thanks for giving us an opportunity to meet our mentors and to have fun with them. Thanks for setting up some events for us all. I have had a great time and I think everyone else has as well and I would love to keep this program going.'*

*'I believe that this is a grand program and I have really enjoyed being part of it. Thank you for making me part of this. My mentor has really made me enjoy being part of it. It's a really good program and it's great fun to have a mentor who looks out for you.'*

*'I loved the program, it's very fun and interactive and it's great to talk to someone who has had more experience than you. I strongly recommend this to all Year 7s in 2017 as it helps a lot. Thank you.'*



## Contact Us

Any news or concerns, please contact

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General Placement

Mondays—Shepparton HS

Tuesdays—Mooroopna SC

Wednesdays—Wanganui Park SC

Thursdays—McGuire College

Fridays—Community of Greater  
Shepparton