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June News

President's Message: Never Give Up

During the period of learning from home, many challenges had to be overcome. Families have had a far better appreciation for educators and educators for families as they have worked together to achieve some form of curriculum learning in uncharted waters never experienced before. Our thoughts have been with families who have students with severe disabilities. These past few weeks have been extremely tough on those families and support school educators.

Were you able to keep your child focused and doing the necessary work that was assigned?

Did your students' school keep in touch of the progress, not only with the student but the supervising parents/carers to see if they are ok and understanding the work that the child/student is completing?

If you were one of the families of many who found the task of learning at home challenging, do not despair because many educators were in the same boat. But the most satisfying and rewarding result during these unprecedented times is families and educators did not give up.

Parent and school engagement were at the highest level, working a common goal to keep students safe while giving quality learning in multiple ways. Some educators went outside the square/norm to engage and keep students on track for a return to classroom learning.

Remember, many teachers taught from home, with their own families to care for and health concerns. Many educators and families went to great lengths to teach and supervise students, in at times, very stressing and challenging environments.

With all schools now back to classroom learning, TASSO has been bombarded with parent concerns around providing up to date classwork for students being kept home until the end of term 2 for various legitimate reasons. Parents were informed that they would have to go on the dept website to obtain work, this has caused problems, particularly where a device was not available, poor reception, hard to access website and schoolwork not the same as the classwork.

Some students have excelled in-home learning, while others are welcoming the return to a more vigorous and sterilized routine.

The school report card for term two has been an interesting discussion around many family dinner and breakfast tables, with questions asked:

- 1) Will my child get a report card this term and, will it be informative?
- 2) Will the report card just be a tick in a box?

Or how will my child be adequately assessed when the teachers have not been around my child. I wholeheartedly recommend that parents stay engaged with their child's learning. Phone the principal, teacher or grade leader and ask questions. No question is a silly question, keep the parent/carer engagement strong.

Further information can be found at <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

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Term 2 finally recommenced with staggered starts from Kinder to Yr 12, with Yrs 7 – 12 recommencing on the 9th June 2020.

Members of the committee and staff are still working from home, but plans are now afoot for the return to the office environment in the very near future. Like all workplaces, TASSO want to ensure that they are meeting all safety requirements around the potential risk associated with COVID-19.

Since our last newsletter in early May TASSO Management and Members of the Committee have been extremely busy fielding calls, liaising with government, media, members of school's associations and parents, just to name a few.

A large amount of these enquiries were regarding the shifting environment due to the impact of COVID-19 and how it impacted on returning to school, running School Association Meetings and AGM's. There was also a lot of media interest around COVID-19 and its impact on school environments, along with the introduction of the mobile phone policy for students effective from 9 June 2020.

Listed below are meetings and some of the activities TASSO Reps and staff have participated in since our last newsletter in May 2020.

Thu Apr 30	TASSO Survey released – Learning from Home	
Fri May 1	TASSO Media Release – Scurrilous Behaviour in Challenging Times – Private Schools Funding Advance	
Mon May 4	TasCOSS Community Services COVID-19 meeting	Microsoft Teams
Tue May 5	DoE Years 11 & 12 Extension Program Reference Group	Microsoft Teams
Fri May 8	TASSO May Newsletter released	
Mon May 11	TasCOSS Community Services COVID-19 meeting	Microsoft Teams
Tue May 12	TASC Meeting (Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards & Certification)	Microsoft Teams
	Education Research & the Antarctic IAS – focussing on the challenges & solutions for industry & education	Online
Sat May 16	ACSSO Board and Delegates Meeting	Microsoft Teams
Mon May 18	TasCOSS Community Services COVID-19 meeting	Microsoft Teams
Tue May 19	ACSSO Member Representative Meeting	Teleconference
Wed May 20	Management Committee meeting – Part A	Microsoft Teams
Thu May 21	Management Committee meeting – Part B	Microsoft Teams
Mon May 25	TasCOSS Community Services COVID-19 meeting	Microsoft Teams
	Education Research & the Antarctic Industry Advisory Council	Teleconference
Thu Jun 4	ARACY Learning from Lockdown	Webinar
Fri Jun 5	7LA Tasmania Talks interview – Students returning to school	Phone
	Meeting with a member of DoE COVIC Response Team	Phone
Tues Jun 10	Microsoft Teams Training (staff)	Online

**TEACH
LEARN**
Live
PODCAST

EPISODE 1:
Kerry McMinn
Principal,
Albuera Street Primary School

More Teachers, Quality Teaching

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/2020/06/teach-learn-live-podcast-episode-1/>

Tasmanian Schooling History

Beaconsfield PS was founded way back in 1883, around forty years after the gold rush. To give you a bit of context, that is around the same time that Tasmania got it's very first telephone line. It's also the same time that the Tasmanian Education Department was created, centralising all schools.



Schoolgirls from ~ 1890s



A Boys Class - 1912



In 1954 the Beaconsfield Area School was built which later became the primary school.





Parents, friends, and allies proudly march with the PFLAG banner in the 2020 Taspride Parade.

COVID-19 has brought disruption to all our lives and we trust that you and your family have stayed safe and well during this challenging time. Home-schooling has been at the forefront of our minds and has made most parents very aware of the value of our wonderful teachers.

With all the challenges that this pandemic has brought us there has been the most wonderful opportunity for families to get to know each and enjoy each other's company. We are reminded of how very young children process what is going on around them. Let me share an insight from one family: Tom aged five when going back to school was asked by his sister Stella "if there is no one for me to play with me at school, will you play with me Tom?" Tom answered, very definitely, "No". His mother then asked, "Who will you be playing with Tom; to which his reply was, "I'll be playing on my own" and when asked "Why" he replied "Mom, the COVID VIRUS!"

For those parents and teachers who are unaware of PFLAG Tasmania we would like to introduce you to who we are what we do. PFLAG's role in the community is to provide advocacy, education, information, community support, and advise to government on diversity and inclusion relating to the members of the LGBTIQ + community, parents, friends, and allies.

We hold regular meetings, social functions, talks on topics of interest and celebrate diversity days of importance to community. We are regular participants at 'Let's Get Together: Diversity Education Program' conducted by A Fairer World through schools in Tasmania. Our role is to talk about diversity, advocacy, self-awareness, as well as current issues in Australia and around the world in relation to the LGBTIQ + community. Frequently questions are asked by students and teachers about gender identity, gender diversity and gender dysphoria. Students are encouraged to talk to their parents about issues they are questioning. We are more than happy to talk with teachers who often have questions about where to find information and, how to best support students.

As you may already be aware, the LGBTIQ+ community experiences higher levels of discrimination resulting in a range of mental health conditions. Unresolved distress can often have devastating results, that can shatter not only the LGBTIQ+ community but also the wider community. As a result, PFLAG has undertaken a major whole of community Action Plan for suicide prevention in a regional area. As a result of the plan A Community Hub was established to provide advocacy, mental health support, and connection to the broader community. Ongoing initiatives of the Hub has seen the evolution of a more aware, supportive, and inclusive community.



Our membership has grown steadily over the years as parents, grandparents, family, friends, and allies support the campaign to ensure the rights of our loved ones are protected. Many members become vocal advocates for change. All parents, families and community want for their young ones is to grow up being true to themselves.

Merran Newman (Mez)
Chairperson
PFLAG Tasmania
M: 0438692179
<https://www.facebook.com/pflagtasmania/>



2 June 2020

Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Education and Training

TCE end of year exams

In light of what has been an extraordinary year for Year 11 and 12 students with the impacts of COVID-19, adjustments have been made to external assessments for 2020 to ensure student wellbeing is supported.

Expert panels have reviewed and verified the external assessment requirements for all pre-tertiary Levels 3 and 4 courses.

A cross-sector Working Group comprising all school sectors and TASC have reviewed and verified these requirements on a course-by-course basis.

Of the 51 adjustments for 2020, 41 have been finalised. The final 10 (covering English 3, maths and science courses) will be published on June 12.

Adjustments made to external assessments have been grouped into four types:

- **Adjustments to reflect 2020 adjustments to courses.** For example, Art Production, Media Production, Drama, Health Studies.
- **Adjustments to written exams to streamline content.** For example, Accounting, English Literature and Economics.
- **Adjustments to some folio due dates.** For example, some folios have later due dates to give students more time including Student Directed Inquiry, Psychology and Housing and Design.
- **Adjustments to externally assessed performances.** For example, Dance Choreography and Performance, and Music.

Students who are eligible can be confident they will receive an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) which, as always, will be comparable with other Year 12 students across the country.

Depending on their chosen Level 3 or 4 courses, external assessment for Years 11 and 12 students can include written exams, research projects, folios, performance and oral exams.

I would like to thank all teachers, school staff, the working group and TASC for their continued understanding and commitment to supporting students and their families during this uncertain and difficult time.



Local Hero



TASSO LINKS OF INTEREST

New online primary school resources launched by the ATO

<https://www.vcta.asn.au/vcta-news/ato-launches-new-primary-school-resources-aligned-to-the-curriculum>

COVID-19

<https://tasso.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/190320-COVID-19-v.2.pdf>

Scurrilous – Private School Funding

<https://tasso.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Scurrilous.pdf>

Courage, Patience & Respect

https://tasso.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Courage_-Patience_-_Respect-Together-We-Will-Achieve.pdf

TASSO is a not-for-profit community based organisation, providing guidance and support to parents/carers of students in State Schools and Colleges, assistance and resources to School Associations and school communities.

TASSO does not directly endorse any events, workshops or products advertised on our newsletter unless clearly specified.

TASSO News June

June 26th, 2020



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TASSO is the recognised peak state body and a not-for-profit community organisation representing Tasmanian state schools and colleges. We also provide guidance and support to parents, students, communities and School Associations.

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