I am often amazed at the reasons the school receives to explain student absences. Each parent/guardian of a child who is of compulsory school age must ensure that the child attends school on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. There are only a few circumstances that fall into the "reasonable excuse" category, such as illness or funerals.

Parents who keep their child home for reasons that are not "reasonable" are doing their child a disservice. Things like planning to take your holiday two or three days before the Term ends are avoidable, and impact on the student’s learning.

We’ve been tracking the results from Term 1 and comparing them to attendance. It is not surprising that students who have lower attendance tend to do worse in the results.

I include some information from a Fact Sheet about Regular School Attendance. Did you know? Research shows that in Queensland, higher student attendance at school is associated, on average, with higher student achievement.

Why is regular attendance at school important?

Regular school attendance will mean that your child gets a better chance at life. Your child will achieve better when they go to school all day, every school day:

- they learn better
- they make friends
- they are happier
- they have a brighter future.

Why must I send my child to school?

Under Queensland law, you must make sure your child of school age is enrolled and attends school all day, every school day unless they have a reasonable excuse. Illness, doing work experience, competing in a school sporting event or going on a school excursion are reasonable excuses for being absent from school.

Principals decide if the excuse given for your child’s absence is reasonable.

Avoid keeping your child away from school for:

- birthdays, shopping, visiting family and friends, if they sleep in, looking after other children, minor check-ups or care such as haircuts.

Routine medical or other health appointments should be made either before or after school or during the school holidays.

While it is a last resort, it is important to understand that you may be prosecuted if your child is not attending school regularly.

What should I do if our family is going on a holiday in school time?

You are encouraged not to schedule holidays during school time. If your family holiday is during school time, let the school know in advance and talk about what arrangements can be made for your child. Depending on the circumstances the school may be able to provide tasks for your child to complete while they are absent or assist you to organise an exemption from schooling.
Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away from school?

Yes, you must let the school know the reason why your child is absent from school, if not beforehand, then within two school days of their return to school.

Rob Slater
Principal

**Important Information for All Parents**

We have had some recent issues with parents accessing the front administration car park to drop off or collect their child/children. Please note the sign on the front gate which clearly states that **THIS IS NOT A PICK UP OR DROP OFF ZONE.**

All pick up and drop offs must occur in the designated areas (beside the school near the Chinese club, along Boundary St in front of the school, in First St behind Stanton Lodge).

We value your child’s safety and request you adhere to the designated pick up and drop off zones.

**Townsville State High School Facebook Page**

Our Facebook page has been active since late last year and it is terrific to see the amount of content about our students and school programs appearing on the site and being updated on a daily basis. To view the page and post a message, please access via this link and once on the page, hit ‘like’


We are following a clear and strict set of guidelines related to Facebook usage by schools and our ‘gatekeepers’ are currently doing a fantastic job of monitoring content!

**Payment of 2016 Textbook and Resource Hire Fees**

Participation in the 2016 Student Resource Scheme requires payments as follows:

- Yr 7-9 $170.00; Yr 10-12 $195.00
- Plus some subject specific costs for Year 10/11/12 students.

Payment may be made in full as a single payment or by instalments.

Please refer to the Participation Agreement Form forwarded with the invoices for 2016. If you do not have a copy of the Participation Agreement Form you can collect a copy from the school office.

Please elect to participate or not participate in the scheme on the Agreement Form and return to the school as soon as possible. Non-payment of the participation fee by the designated payment date(s) may result in debt recovery action being undertaken for the overdue participation fee which may result in extra costs being incurred by the parent/carer.

Non-payment of the participation fee will also result in withdrawal of students from extra-curricular activities some examples include: school camps, afternoon sports, NQ Sports, Vocal and Guitar Lessons, use of the School buses, Yr 12 Formal, Senior Jerseys, School Magazine, posting out of school reports.

For your convenience, the school office has Eftpos facilities and can be processed either in person or over the phone. The school also accepts payment via Direct deposit to the school's
Your prompt assistance with explanation of absences will be greatly appreciated.

**PROCEDURES FOR LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY DEPARTURE**

Should a student arrive late to school, a letter of explanation or a note in the Student Diary from the student’s parent/caregiver is required. This letter or note must be presented to the Rolls Office if the student is arriving at school after 8:45am.

If there is a need to collect your student from school early, you must do so via the front office and sign your student out. A note should be written in your student’s Student Diary, the student then presents the note to the Student Counter before school. A Leave Request will be given. The student will show this to their teacher when they need to leave the class.

Lunch passes will **NOT** be approved. This applies to students of all year levels.

Students who feel unwell at school must **first** report to the class teacher who will direct them to the General Office with a note to this effect. During morning or lunch time recesses, students should report directly to the Office.

Facilities for housing sick students are limited. Sick bay is used as a holding station only. Your student needs to know a contact number so that we can phone parents and send students home as quickly as possible.

**Students late to school**

Recently we have noticed an increase in the number of students coming late to school. Can we please remind you that if a student is late, they need a letter of explanation to be presented to the main office on arrival.

It is important that students arrive to school on time each day in order for them to be prepared for their classes. Many students are missing TAG which means that they are not getting notices and messages from their teachers. This can mean that they are late to classes or miss out on notes to go home.

We value your students’ learning. Please continue to work with us to achieve the best possible outcomes for your child/ren.

**Junior Secondary News**

**Message from the Junior Secondary Deputy Principal**

NAPLAN testing for 2016 commences this week for students in years 7 and 9. Tests are undertaken across three days (10th to the 12th of May) with a catch up day on Friday (13th of May) for any students who are absent on one of the initial days. Testing follows the schedule below.
Students will need the following equipment with them each day:

- 2B of HB pencil (no pacers)
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Blue or black pen (writing test only)
- ONE blank piece of paper (writing test only)
- Calculators (numeracy calculator test only)
- Blank paper for working out in the numeracy tests

As testing commences at 9.03 am students are asked to arrive at school no later than 8.45 am on each day. Breakfast will be provided at school for students.

**PBL = Positive Behaviour for Learning**

Townsville State High School is a PBL school. We focus on supporting students to demonstrate behaviours that assist theirs and others learning.

For term two we are looking at the impact of disruption on learning. Students are taught how to avoid making noises, calling out, tapping, moving around or doing anything that may prevent others achieving to their best.

Our current focus is “speaking respectfully in class”. This addresses the manner in which students speak to their teacher and to other students. They are encouraged to always be polite, utilise manners and ensure their tone is appropriate.

Students demonstrating this can earn GOTCHAs. These are ‘banked’ in the office and students can cash them in to earn prizes of their choice.

Ask your student what their current GOTCHA tally and see if they have identified a prize they are working their way towards earning!

**Tanya Nelson**  
**Deputy Principal**

### Senior Secondary News

#### School Awards

At the end of Term 1 we celebrated the achievement of students in the senior school. These students were recognised for their efforts, whether they were for Diligence, Academic Improvement, Academic Achievement or Town High Five (a school award that recognises students who are positive influence in the classroom). We recognise students each term with in school awards, and at the end of the year we celebrate our students at the Annual Awards Night.

**Awards for Term 1 went to:**

**Year 10:**

**Diligence:** Laree Dixon (Graphics), Celeste Venes (Graphics), Ruman Yusuf Omar (Cert I IT), Ahmed-Nur Abdirisaq Sheik-Ali (Mathematics), Hayley Spindler (Mathematics), Maria Lumme (Mathematics), Paulyn Ventura (Mathematics), Thomas Kennedy (Drama), Polo Mwinyi (Humanities), Tiana Campbell (Humanities), Abbie Paul (Humanities), Jacob Tydman (Humanities)

**Town High Five:** Mustafa Ebasha (Cert I IT), Roda Wali Ahmed (Mathematics), Jeffrey Fennol (Mathematics), Cleone Kelly (Mathematics), Ciaran Barker (Drama), Meg McIntosh (Humanities)

**Academic Achievement:** Sam Gayton (ITD), Kyra Griffith (Graphics), Connor Crawford (Mathematics), Cody Healey (Mathematics), Thomas Kennedy (Mathematics), Lalaine Villana (Mathematics), Zac Potter (Mathematics & Humanities), Jonathon Heffernan (Drama), Haylee Hancock (Humanities)

**Academic Improvement:** Tasmyn Waterhouse (Drama)

**Year 11:**

**Diligence:** Elizabeth Timms (Japanese), Faith Mooney (ICT), Rylan Kyle (ICT), Mohamed-Amin Abdirisaq Sheik-Ali (ICT), Kallani Huen (ICT), Max Curtis (Graphics), Tasma Kynuna (Workplace Practices), Francine Omari (Workplace Practices), Aden Abdulahi Ibrahim (Workplace Practices), Molly Tomsen (Mathematics B), Abdullahi Abdi Ali (Mathematics C, Chemistry and Mathematics B), Jack Mazlin (Mathematics A), Keanin Oliver (Mathematics A), Julian Pa (Mathematics A and Physical Education), Aurnai Kairae (Mathematics A), Billie-Jayne Hunn (Workplace Practices), Hayden Achten (Legal Studies and Physical Education), Jayden Durrington (Legal Studies), Paris McCabe (Legals Studies), Georgia Scott (Legal Studies), Taylor Lennox (Legal Studies and Drama), Michael Dare (Chemistry), Bianca Agnew (Physical Education), Emily Harding (Physical Education), Jesse McLaury (Physical Education), Billie Hooper (Physical Education)

**Academic Improvement:** Zara Potts (Mathematics B), Danika Crowdy (Workplace Practices), Blake Frankcom (Graphics), Elizabeth Timms (Chemistry), Alicia Coburn (Chemistry), Rylan Kyle (Drama)

**Academic Achievement:** Samuel Brassington (Graphics), Kade Crawford (Graphics), Jack Mazlin (Workplace Practices), Wataru Baker (Legal Studies), Fin Burton (Legal Studies), Yasmin Eriksson (Legal Studies), CJ Lawlor (Legal Studies), Alicia Coburn (Legal Studies), Wayne Cawthorne (Chemistry), Paris McCabe (Mathematics), Hannah King (Drama)

**Town High Five:** Sadiki Mwinyi (Graphics), Mariam Mwinyi (Workplace Practices), Hannah Anderson (Mathematics C and BCT), Bethany Webber
We have already started to plan for next year’s camp and are sure that the current Year 11 students already have this in their sight. Can’t wait

**Year 11/12 Exam Block**

The Year 11/12 Exam block is Friday 10 June till Friday 17 June. Students are required to attend all exams for all timetabled classes. Additionally, some subjects require submission of other assessment items during this time. Students who do not have an exam or assessment submission during a session are not required at school.

In the last week of school, Year 12 OP eligible students will do a practice QCS test, and Year 10 students will attend their senior subject expo in preparation for their senior subject selections. More information be sent home in regards to these events.

Remember, everyday counts.

**Kaylene Mladenovic**  
**Deputy Principal Senior School**

**Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)**

The Queensland government set a goal that 100% of graduating year 12 students should leave high school with a QCE. Last year Townsville State High School was one of only a few high schools in the district to meet that goal.

*But what is the QCE?* The QCE is Queensland’s senior schooling qualification. This internationally recognised qualification is achievement based. To gain their QCE senior students must meet a set standard of learning and meet both literacy and numeracy requirements. The QCE recognises that students undertake a diverse range of studies throughout their senior schooling and, by doing so, allows students to choose a learning path that best suits their desired schooling outcome.

The QCE:

- recognises the achievements of senior students,
- shows employers and training providers that students have worked consistently and to a high standard
- may be required to enrol in further education and training in Queensland, interstate and overseas

*How do senior students meet the set standards?* To gain credits in their chosen course of study, students must meet a minimum of either a Sound Achievement or Competent (depending on the course’s type of assessment grade). Senior students are able to gain credits in the following range of learning options:

- **School subjects**
- **Vocational education and training (VET)**
- **School-based traineeships (SBT) or school-based apprenticeships (SBA)**

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**Year 12**

**Diligence:** Fierce Maihi (Graphics), Rachel Warhurst (Workplace Practices), James Welsh (Mathematics C), Khadro Mohamed Omar (Mathematics A), Mishayla-Rae Kupfer-Moren (Mathematics A), Joshua Jones (Mathematics B), Ruby Williams (Mathematics B), Ashlee Andrews (Chemistry, Physical Education and Legal Studies), Nicholai Hammer (Legal Studies and Chemistry), Talysha Harrison (Legal Studies), Francesqua Heffernan (Legal Studies), Maria Fleming (BCT), Margaret Sino (BCT & Recreation Studies), Lachlan Waters (BCT), Nicholas Tiley (Graphics), Lachlan Stewart (Chemistry), Osman Abdi Murman (Chemistry), Tiarna Crowhurst (Drama), Hayley Andrews (Physical Education), Cam Doak (Physical Education), Kel Crisafulli (Physical Education)

**Academic Improvement:** Errol Finn (Graphics), Perry Chapple (Chemistry), Tiarna Crowhurst (Chemistry), Cherie Lee (Chemistry), Maria Fleming (Chemistry), Angus Davey (Drama)

**Academic Achievement:** Renny Miller (BCT and Chemistry), Joshua Jones (Chemistry), Ruby Williams (Chemistry), Lachlan Waters (Drama)

**Town High Five:** Darius Burato (Workplace Practices), Cherie Lee (English), James Welsh (Chemistry), Lorrie Salomon (Chemistry), Phoebe Miller (Chemistry), Talysha Harrison (Chemistry), Leo Wangwongvivat (Drama)

**Year 12 Camp**

During the last week of term the Year 12 students came together and attended a week long leadership camp at Lake Tinaroo. This year was the best attended camp that we have had in many years with approximately 70% of students participating. Those students who did not attend used this time to complete Work Experience, with many accruing credit towards their certificate courses.

During the camp, which was shorter than in previous years due to the public holiday, the students packed in as many activities as they could. They did low ropes, raft building, a cooking challenge, kayaking, a challenge course which included exploring life after school and of course the legendary, “Town High Talent Show.”

Students travelled to and from the camp by bus, which for many added to the shared experience. On Thursday afternoon we arrived home with many tired young people and the feedback was they had a wonderful time. A special thank you my fellow staff who attended the camp also as without teachers willing to supervise, we could not run such activities: Ms Harvey; Mr Santos; Mr Gowdy; Ms O’Shea; Mr Hunter; Miss Staub and Mr Williams.
• TAFE courses, certificates or diplomas
• Enrichment courses

Townsville State High School is proud of the achievements of our senior students and our goal is to maintain our 100% QCE attainment. Should you wish to learn more about the QCE, please talk to either our school Guidance Officer, the Deputy Principal of Senior Schooling, or myself. You can also visit the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au, or, Student Connect at www.studentconnect.qcaa.qld.edu.au. We will be presenting information on the QCE during our upcoming Parent/Teacher evening on 9th March 2016.

Steve Gowdy
A/Head of Department Senior School

Important Notice for Senior Students

Student on their P’s are not permitted to transport other students unless they are siblings. Students who drive to school are also reminded that they must comply with all parking provisions within the school and they must not leave school grounds during the day. Failure to follow this policy could result in school disciplinary action. The safety and wellbeing of all students is a priority for our school. If you have any questions regarding this policy please see Mrs Mladenovic.

Uniform Changes for Senior Students

Please note the changes for the senior uniform. It is now compulsory for all students in Years 10, 11 & 12 to wear the Senior shirt no polo shirts are acceptable.

Kaylene Mladenovic
Deputy Principal Senior School

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

ALL STUDENTS YEARS 10, 11 AND 12

If applying for a USI at home complete the **Student Form - USI Collection and Verification** to record this information and return to the front office.

From 1 January 2015, the Australian Government requires all students studying Vocational Education and Training (VET) to have a Unique Student Identifier (USI). This includes students who are studying VET in schools. Townsville State High School must have a valid USI for a student before issuing a qualification or statement of attainment.

What is a USI?

From 2015, anyone undertaking a Vocational Education and Training course (eg: through TAFE or other training providers, but not University) will need to have a “Unique Student Identifier” (USI) - this is a bit like an account number made up of letters and numbers and is allocated to you. It is used to identify you when undertaking any vocational training from 2015.

This USI allows you to login to your training account and see all your training records and the results of all your courses. You can also print out all your results to take to an employer when you are applying for a job or to any training provider when you are doing any additional courses.

You should have this Unique Student Identifier before you can commence any courses and must have it to obtain your certification or statement of attainment. If you don’t already have one, you can create one at www.usi.gov.au.

At Townsville SHS we will be assisting students with the application for their USI. Students’ must provide suitable identification through one of the following:

- Driver’s licence
- Medicare card
- Birth Certificate (Australian) — please note a birth certificate extract is not sufficient
- Australian Passport
- Visa (with Non-Australian Passport) for international students
- Certificate Of Registration By Descent
- Citizenship Certificate
- ImmiCard

Each learner at Townsville State High School will either be required to provide their existing USI (if not already on record at the RTO) or apply for a USI. Students can access the USI Fact Sheets from the school’s web page and also the school’s curriculum network.

Each student who enrolls in a VET course will need to complete the following:

**Action 1. The student applies for a USI at home**

- The school sends home information about the USI and what the process will be for application and provision through Newsletters and Parent Information letters
- Students obtain a USI at home via the website www.usi.gov.au
- The student provides the USI to the school using the USI Collection and Verification form
- The school verifies the USI via the website www.usi.gov.au
- The school records the USI, inputs this information into the Student Management System or record in the USI Register

**Action 2. The student applies for a USI at the school**

- The school sends home information about the USI and what the process will be for application and the types of identification that will be required by the learner
- Students apply at the school during a set class time with the assistance of the staff
- Students will record their USI and provide the number to the teacher using the USI Collection and Verification form
- The school verifies the USI via the website www.usi.gov.au
**News from the English Department**

With Dr Who as our inspiration the English department would like to showcase some ‘very good stories’ written by students. *The Flight of the Fugitive* is an imaginative short story written by Joshua Jones (Year 12), Celeste Venes’ (Year 10) story *Wrong Flight* explores the theme of fear. Lily Cooke’s (Year 7) *Dancing Dilemma* is an autobiographical story.

These stories are the students’ original work at submission.

**The Flight of the Fugitive**

Huff... Huff... WHEEZE! Huff... The laboured breathing echoed through the vast barren fields. The sun beamed down, scorching the Earth, draining the colour and life out of everything it touched. The dry heat, the blinding light, the lack of water, of food, all of it designed to make a man go insane. In fact it almost had as Dinawan staggered across the burning ground. It was mid-afternoon, at least that’s what he figured, and after five days on the run, the heat, and lack of water, was starting to worry him.

At 6ft tall Dinawan usually cut a striking figure; long, strong legs, course brown hair, the piercing way his eyes took in every feature, and the native Australian looks recognised by all. But after five days on the run, under the burning sun all day and the freezing moon all night, he looked more like a wild animal.

He’d been staggering through the endless paddocks of the farm for hours now, tired, thirsty, hungry. All he wanted was ten minutes rest, but he couldn’t even afford that, not with the hunters on his tail. For three weeks he had been kept as a slave, forced to work and do their bidding. When he acted up, he was starved, beaten, and put to work. He’d just about given up hope when they made their fatal mistake; they forgot to lock his cell! Since then he’d been pursued relentlessly. There was no hiding, only running, endless running, trying to escape enslavement.

As he staggered towards his destination, a small barn, faded and desolate, his tired, droopy eyes tried to watch the horizon (a bit hard with all the wind-blown dirt in his eyes). It was torture being out in this sun, this heat. He wondered what would kill him first. The thirst, his mouth suggested. No, the hunger! replied his stomach. I put 30 bucks on the headache! screamed his head. This battle had been going on for hours and even Dinawan had no idea who would win. His mouth was dry and grainy, swallowing was like drinking sandpaper. His stomach rumbled and gurgled begging for food. His eyes were dry and sticky, and his skin was darker than usual courtesy of the oven he was walking through. He hoped, no he prayed there was food and water at the barn. He would die if there wasn’t.

Dinawan pressed onwards, the barn was less than one kilometre away, almost close enough to touch. Almost. He tried to ignore his own pain, the piercing behind his eyes, the black spots in his vision. He tried to ignore the eerie sound the wind made when it blew across the dirt, or even the vultures circling above, watching his progress with a sick, hungry satisfaction.

He staggering, trips, and loses his balance. His vision goes black. His head pounds like a drum. His heart races. No, he thought, I will not die here! Those five days as a fugitive had caught up, but he was not going to give up so close to salvation!

Dinawan tried to steady his breathing. Breathe in... Breathe out... Breathe in... Breathe out... Home, he thought to himself. Only one thing had kept him going these past few weeks; his desire to go home, that great southern land, that land down under. He focussed on home, the vast Australian outback, a land of opportunity, the sandy white beaches, that great ocean breeze and the way the sun painted the morning sky a range of colours from red to yellow to shades of purple. That was worth fighting for.

His vision cleared. Ten more steps! Nine... The wind blew dust in his eyes. Eight... Seven... A dust cloud raced towards the barn. Six... His legs wobble. Five... Four... The vulture screeched with delight. Three... Two... One...!

Dinawan staggered through the doors. Ugh! A wave of nausea passed over him as his sinuses were assaulted by a purely horrible smell. A revolting mixture of old hay, fertiliser and farm animals wafted through the air making him gag. The barn was a mess; old hay lying in clumps around the place, farm tools and glass scattered everywhere, rats, flies and cockroaches thrived in the pigsty of a barn. There was even a stray chicken strolling through without a care in the world. Dinawan watched as it casually waddled down the barn, skirting around debris, passing an old tractor lying in pieces. “What the hell?” he managed to croak. Dinawan followed the chicken, watched as it rounded the tractor to find... another pile of hay. The chicken rounded this pile and Dinawan lost sight of it before he heard the most melodious sound he had ever heard; SPLASH! He staggered around the hay coming to face a trough full of water leaning against the back wall. He hobbled over, collapsed at the base and started taking in water by the mouthful.

Dinawan sighed with relief. He sat there a while resting, recovering, as the piercing pain behind his eyes and the blackspots in his vision subsided. He was alive, just.
As the pain passed, Dinawan dragged himself to his feet. Although his thirst was quenched, he still had an empty stomach and he was on the run. Besides at that point the chicken started going on about something to do with a book. Great, he thought, now I can add hallucinations to my list of problems. Dinawan went back past the hay bale.

Something was wrong. There was a sinister edge in the air. He scanned the area. The rats were gone. So too the flies and cockroaches. Not even the vultures were screeching. The only sound, the hollow, eerie flow of wind.

With his heart pounding in his throat he took one careful step forward. Nothing. He took another. The bile built up in his mouth. Still nothing. He made a third step. Click! It was faint, barely audible, but it turned Dinwan’s blood to ice.

He turned, made to run, but it was too late. A sharp spike of pain jolted through his body, stopping him in his tracks. He became dizzy, unbalanced, the black spots returning with vengeance. The world began to tilt and spin, round and round, and before he knew it Dinawan was on his side, laying in the disgusting mixture of old hay and vermin excrement. He lay there staring at large shard of glass protruding from the earth, staring into the eyes of his reflection. He heard the sound of heavy footsteps behind him. His heart pounded the inside of his chest, crushing the air out of his lungs, as he lay there in complete horror at the realisation he’d been finally caught.

He lay there, the darkness slowly taking over his vision, just staring in stunned, horrified silence at the shard of glass. He gazed blankly, barely recognising his own features in his own reflection. He regarded his long neck, his beady yellow eyes and his thick brown coat. Dinawan breathed a heavy sigh through his beak as the darkness finally won, his vision slowly fading, along with the face of the emu staring back at him through the glass.

Wrong Flight

You really only get one shot at this whole ‘death’ thing, and to be perfectly honest I had rather wanted mine to have counted for a little more. I’m still not quite sure what I had expected. Maybe dying a nurse or a revolutionary? Maybe even just a parent? I would have settled for that. I would have settled for anything but the reality really. If I’m still being honest I would say that my death was, if anything, anticlimactic.

It started, so to speak, by a complete and utter chance on a business class flight to Miami, which was already bad enough as I, a sixteen year old girl, already felt completely out of place, but to add to that sense of anxiety the thought of my life being held in the hands of an over-glorified can with seats, that by all laws of physics, should not be able to glide through the air made my stomach absolutely churn. I guess the thing that scared me was the impossibility of it all and the way I would feel when the air I was so used to breathing would rush past the windows, laughing at me as though it was mocking me for no longer being able to inhale its sweet essence. In short, I was scared of my own emotions, feelings and thoughts rather my own impending death during the, at the time imaginary, plane crash. Due to this complex fear I chose to opt for the seat away from the window, where instead sat an ordinary looking business man in the same plain black and white suit as everyone else on the flight, playing Tetris on his mobile. I have to admit that at the time he was making me rather anxious, checking his over-priced looking watch every few seconds.

"We’re taking off," he informed me, tucking his phone into his pocket as the plane chugged giddily into the atmosphere.

I just nodded and looked away, trying to ignore the vast nothingness that the can was creating between the land and I.

I began squeezing my own hand as if there was a foreign creature from a Sci-Fi movie in my bones that I was trying to crush. The man must have noticed this.

"Fear of flying?" he asked, and I simply nodded. He gave a small chuckle. "You would have been better on the 2:30 to Atlanta. I was supposed to be on that godforsaken flight, you know?" he said with an irritated little groan, checking outside the window.

"Boarded the wrong one."

"What do you mean by 'better off'?" I asked. I looked at him, trying to avoid seeing the clouds gliding by the window like smug, deceptive safety nets for the imaginary (again, at the time) plummet.

"Literally," the man elaborated, "godforsaken, there was a terrorist on board." He pulled out a pack of peanuts and began popping them into his mouth as if his knowledge of the terrorist was something he believed he should share with a sixteen year-old girl.

I was definitely lost now, I furrowed my brow. "How could you possibly know that?"

He shrugged. "I boarded the wrong plane. The terrorist was off to Atlanta, 2:30." He heaved an angry sigh. "The boss is going to murder me."

"Boss?" I couldn’t even begin to imagine what line of work this man could possibly be involved in.

"Hades," he muttered. "Can’t blame him; trouble at home, you know? His wife left him, again. Poor guy."

I couldn’t help but feel a tad curious, but it was more like the kind of curious you are when you see a car crash but you drive past too fast to see anything. I wasn’t sure if I wanted to know, but I asked anyway. "Hades? As in the god of the underworld?"

"God?" the man chuckled. "This is the twenty-first century love. We say CEO now." He rummaged at the bottom of his nearly empty peanut bag and shook the last remnants into his unusually large mouth.

I took a moment to digest what he had just told me. I was honestly too worried about the light turbulence we were experiencing at the time to question the logic behind it all. I just looked at him questioningly, "So, if your boss is Hades then what does that make you?" I asked it with a mix of inquisitiveness and sarcasm.

"Death," he replied cheerfully as he reached into his pocket and pulled out a business card on which his profession was stated as, "Destroyer of Worlds". I nodded slowly and pocketed the card. Looking back, it was a rather strange response to the events that had just occurred.

Any last regrets? He asked rather offhandedly, stuffing the empty peanut packet into the small gap between our seats.
I frowned, a little alarmed by this sharp digression.

"You know before you die?"

"I thought you said the terrorist was on the other plane?"

The man shrugged. "By getting on this plane I kind of screwed up Fate," he said with a little remorse. "What happens in times like this is Fate has to work through her lunch shift trying to fix things so that the terrorist gets caught. When the terrorist is captured this planes engines will fail and you’ll all die horribly. The boss will murder me, I’ll be working overtime for weeks, so," he said looking at me "any last regrets?"

There was a brief silence between us as he silently lamented over his lost free time and I mourned my own lost life. At that moment it all felt so redundant, so pointless. I wasn’t scared of death because I was a pessimist and I believed that I wouldn’t feel guilt after I died, which was the biggest mistake I ever made, so I wouldn’t feel bad for my family. I wasn’t scared of the pain, I knew it would end eventually. I was scared of the feeling of the plane descending into the earth that I once walked so vibrantly upon. I was scared of falling into the ground that once served as my home. The ground that I wanted to desperately to explore every inch of. As these thoughts raced through my mind he coughed and looked at me as if demanding an answer to his previous question regarding my regrets. I opened my mouth, expecting to say something poetic about the land but my mind went blank. I closed my mouth again, searching for an answer on the infinite blank sheet that took the place of my brain and all that I could come up with was, "Sushi. I never tried sushi."

Death just looked at me, raised his eye brows and then nodded, as if it was perfectly reasonable for a sixteen year-old’s biggest regret to be never trying a westernised Japanese dish.

A sharp metallic ringing interrupted this moment of confusion. He dove his hand into his pocket and fished out his smartphone.

"Sorry," he mumbled, briefly checking the dimly lit screen. "Fate’s just texted, the engines going to blow up in two minutes." He looked up with a vaguely apologetic shrug.

There was a tiny pause n our conversation in which I sort of sarcastically laughed. "You weren’t even supposed to be on this flight, everything seems so pointless and anticlimactic. I have done nothing with my life, by choice because I’m a child but I guess doesn’t matter anymore." I chuckled, here I was, on the verge of death still being the most complicated person on earth by being scared of an idea and my own emotions but not literal death.

I decided to stop dwelling on it. I turned to Death slightly and asked, "What about you? What’s your biggest regret?"

He scratched his chin with his callused thumb and said, "Well. I don’t know, no one’s ever asked. I’ve seen a lot. My intern period was in the Crimean War so that’s a big question." In a short, elusive moment I saw it all. His eyes weren’t just blue anymore, they were the colour of the water people bathed their unknowing children in. They were the colour gunpowder makes when it hits dying grass. His eyes were the colour of a bullet flying through an impossibly darkened ally. The colour of his eyes was the last emotion soldier felt when riding into a doomed battle. His eyes were the colour of a thousand stories of which he was not allowed to change.

Death slowly pushed the empty peanut packet deeper and deeper into the small gap between us, almost in an act of nervousness. "My biggest regret?" he asked as a siren began informing us of our impending death and the left side of the plane jolted. You could see people’s bravery slowly draining from them as they began experiencing the emotions I was so scared of. "My biggest regret," he said again with a certain tone, "has to be getting on the wrong flight."

Dance Dilemma

"Two minutes!" The stage manager whisper yelled. The notion was definitely not comforting. He could have enlightened us of this information in a relaxing, comforting tone, but no, he had to sound as nervous as a dancer performing on stage for the first time. Oh wait, that was me. In one shaky and sudden movement I looked down at my hands, ‘Stop shaking!’ They seemed to be protesting.

I had known this day was coming for weeks, months even. I knew the dance routine off by heart, for goodness sake I was performing it in my sleep. I glanced around at the other girls, they looked almost bored. ‘How come I was the only one silently suffering from a nervous breakdown? Pull yourself together Lily, stop being so melodramatic,’ I internally laughed at my attempt to calm myself. Some girls from the older class behind me started murmuring to themselves, I whipped my head around. They were staring at me.

"Look…at…thongs" was the only thing I caught. I looked down at my feet and was horrified. I froze in trepidation.

I was still staring at my feet waiting to wake up from this sick, horrendous nightmare but I never did. Abruptly my arm started being pulled and my feet started automatically moving without my consent. I snapped out of my daze and swiftly looked up. I stared at the tall girl pulling me off the wings toward back stage. I couldn’t make out her facial expression in the darkness. She was a slightly bigger girl with wider hips than a normal dancer but other than that you could immediately tell she had the body of a dancer. The way she was running, it was like every step was a perfect pirouette. ‘Wait up… running.’ She was running. I quickly adjusted my pace to match hers.

With a big whoosh the door flushed opened and I was temporarily blinded by the sudden blaring light. My feet finally obeyed my request. I skidded to a stop trying to recover my sight. I blinked a couple of times, trying to get my eyes to adjust to the sudden change in lighting.

“What are you doing?” The voice I heard was urgent and stressed while I also felt someone shaking me.

“We need to go, now.” My eyes recovered from the black, bright, blinding spots. I looked at my rescuer. Eila, Eila was helping me.

We pulled through the chaos, hustle and bustle of back stage. People were everywhere milling around the change rooms, dashing through the hall. We kept running through the back stage, all the while my thongs making loud clapping sounds against the tiles echoing through the small crowded walk way.
We finally made it to our dressing room. Well I say ‘room’, it was more like an auditorium. I hastily snatched my bag from my chair and Elia seized it out of my hand. I drifted back into my dreamy haze, stuck in the thought of the auditorium and the fact we should probably have a proper dressing room. Here I was thinking about this stupid unimportant detail while Elia was frantically tying up the laces of my dance shoes. I knew I should have gotten the slip-on ones.

Swiftly I was being pulled to my feet and we were running again through the endless hall. This time I heard no echoing clapping sound, instead I heard the comforting graceful tap of my feet skipping over the tiles. I burst into the wings with Elia by my side, and a few hushed ‘shhhes’ came from the stage crew. I sprinted to my group just as we were about to go on stage.

“Where did you go?” Ciara asked curiously in a silent hushed tone, I stifled a giggle.

“Oh nowhere important.”

We pranced on stage with big grins as we nailed our dance performance. Next time we performed I made sure I didn’t forget to put on my dance shoes.

‘Coming soon . . .’

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Sue Anderson
Acting Head of Department – English

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News from the Arts Department

**ARTSWEEK**
23–27 MAY

**WHERE:**
UNDER G BLOCK – OPEN FOR ALL YEAR LEVELS

**WHAT:**
ARTISTS
PERFORMERS
FACE PAINTING
CHALK DRAWING
WHEEL THROWING
OPEN MIC

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It’s Musical time!

Musical fever has hit Town High! With sign ups and auditions completed and rehearsals starting next week, this year’s show, Over the Hill is well underway! The musical follows a group of residents at Shady Pines retirement home who attempt to raise money for Gerald’s much needed hip replacement. With songs from the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and today, this is sure to be a show with something for everyone.

Well done to the students who were successful in their audition; we look forward to working with you to create a fantastic show! If you are in the cast or crew, be sure to keep checking your rehearsal schedule to make sure you are attending all rehearsals. Not in the cast? Well we hope to see you in the audience! Tickets will be on sale in term three and the performances will be on the 25th, 26th and 27th of August at various times.

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Tropics News

**Congratulations and good luck**

Haylee Andrews (Year 11) and Mishayla-Rae Kupfer-Moren (Year 12) have just returned from Adelaide where they played in the U18 National Championships. Both girls had outstanding carnivals
Loudres Foster (year 9) recently competed in the State Classics here in Townsville. Her team finished fourth in Division 2.

The NQ Open Schools Championships will be held here in Townsville from 12–16 May. A number of Tropics staff and students will be participating.

Rohan Lawler (Year 12) and Sam Negri (Year 11) will compete in the boys division. Tim Duroux will coach the team, while Ben Williams is his manager and assistant coach.

The girl’s team consists of Ashlee Andrews (Year 12), Nicola Hampson (Year 12) Mishayla-Rae Kupfer-Moren (Year 12) and Haylee Andrews (Year 11). This team is managed by Jess Strang.

Jude Di Giacomo is the convenor of the Championship.

Townsville State High School Student Dress Code

Below we have set out the rules on the school’s uniform policy as per the Student Diary. We expect all students to have the correct attire. If you have any concerns please contact the relevant Deputy Principal.

### JUNIOR SCHOOL (Years 7 to 9)

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A hat must be worn at ALL times when outside, including HPE lessons and lunch time activities.

### SENIOR SCHOOL (Years 10 to 12)

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### Winter – Boys and Girls Years 7 to 12

| (a) Navy blue tailored long pants |
| (b) The school jersey or navy blue zip-up fleecy lined or plain navy blue jumper without any logos |
| (c) Navy, black or skin coloured tights may be worn under skirt |

Students not in a uniform are to carry a dated explanatory note from home and to have this note signed by the relevant Deputy Principal.

### Jewellery & Make-up regulations

1. If ears are pierced one small, plain stud or sleeper per ear, may be worn in the lobe of the ear only. No facial piercings are permitted
2. One plain signet ring may be worn
3. One simple chain may be worn
4. A plain wrist watch and/or a simple, metal bangle or bracelet, no wider than 2cm
5. Hair must be of a natural colour and be worn neat and tidy

**NB:** Earrings (stud or sleepers) are the ONLY acceptable form of body piercing allowed.

### Safety Standards

As required by Curriculum Activity Risk Management, safety standards involving footwear, hair, jewellery, must also be met.
Hair must be of a natural colour and must be worn in a style which meets school community standards.

Headwear Hijabs / head coverings are to be no longer than shoulder length and must be navy blue in colour.

Tattoos Tattoos are not permitted.

Students representing the school on official excursions/activities are to wear full Representative Dress school uniform, unless notified otherwise.

Students not in a uniform are to carry a dated explanatory note from home and must have this note signed by the Tag teacher or Senior Administration.

Boosting Your Resilience!

There is no shortage of adversity in life. Whether it’s a minor setback or a major trauma, we all endure hardships across our lives.

The differences among us lie not only in the shape hardship takes for us but also in how we respond when it knocks at our door. Do you find yourself weighed down by your seemingly unlucky lot in life? Or do you courageously embrace the struggle?

Resilience is the ability to cope with adversity and to use challenges to forge strength and prosperity. Having resilience does not mean that you don’t struggle, make mistakes, or need to ask for help. Quite to the contrary, resilient individuals are those who keep plugging along even when the situation becomes ugly or exhausting, who learn from their own mishaps and misfortunes, and who rely on others with confidence and trust.

Adversity does create a wake in its path and its tragic side should not be downplayed. But even when tragedy strikes, growth is possible. Post-traumatic growth—which can often occur alongside post-traumatic stress—is the set of positive changes that result from a traumatic experience and can include a deeper appreciation for life, a bolstered sense of one’s own capabilities, and stronger connections to others.

Whether the struggles you face are traumas or everyday setbacks, the tools of resilience will help you to gain greater control over your own path forward and to cultivate positive change. The next time adversity floods your day and leaves you treading water, try these four strategies help keep you afloat.

1. Reframe Your Interpretations

Resilient people find a way to explain their situations in a more positive light while still accepting the reality. For example, responding to a natural disaster. “This was the worst thing that’s ever happened to me, but it’s also one of the best. This community has come together and shown its strength in so many unbelievable ways.” Learn how to get unstuck from your negative emotions here.

We have the ability to decide how we’re going to interpret the adversities we face. The adversities themselves are not positive. But when we work to find an appreciation for what has been introduced and increased for us as we persevere through the adversity, we develop a more grateful approach to living.

The hardship that scars us is often the same stuff of life that manufactures hard-earned wisdom. When all you see is the negative, broaden your perspective by asking yourself, “What good has come about as a result of this adversity?”

2. Identify What You Can Control

Optimists are among the most resilient of us, and they succeed by virtue of focusing their attention on how they can make their situations better. When faced with a challenge, pessimistic thinkers are more likely to be blind to opportunities to enact positive changes. In short, they adopt a victim mentality.

Optimists maintain a more accurate view of the control they do have. Realistic optimism identifies points of control and takes advantage of them. Resilience, by definition, is the act of taking a step forward despite dire circumstances, and when we look critically for something we can control, we lay out the path for ourselves.

When you catch yourself feeling stuck or bogged down in adversity, find one thing you have control over and take action on it. For Example: parents getting divorced, the child of course cannot control this, however they can control how they think and deal with this emotional time. Although this is difficult for all involved, once past the conflict and pain they can look forward to possible harmonies relationships or maybe more time is a parent.

3. Seek Support

Personal strength matters a lot, but ultimately it’s the sense of community and relationship to others that enables true resilience. Studies of children undergoing significant hardship find that kids who have one adult in their lives who provides stability and support are much more likely to do well than kids who don’t. The ability to relate and process one’s struggles in the context of a safe relationship buffers against many of the potential negative effects of childhood trauma.
And relationship benefits extend to adults. Tending to your most important relationships when times are good builds the trust and intimacy that will help those relationships stay strong when adversity hits.

There is a School Support Services Team at Townsville SHS which includes, Guidance Officer – Theresa; School Nurse – Andrea; Community Education Counsellor (CEC) – Rothana; School Police Officer – Snr Const Starr; Chaplain – Chappy Jeff; and Behaviour Management Teacher (BMT) – Mr Patti. We also have Headspace provide a clinic at our school one day a week and referrals are available through Headspace directly; any Doctor or school with a doctor’s appointment required to obtain a Mental Health Plan.

4. Embrace Challenge and Failure

Failure is hard for many of us to take. We’d rather step back from something and wipe our hands clean than risk making a fool of ourselves. But when we adopt a perspective that appropriate challenge can strengthen us as people and that we can learn from both successes and failures, we’re exercising our resilience muscles.

This is not to say that we should seek adversity, but find small, manageable ways to challenge yourself on a regular basis will build your confidence and character. Take the class you’ve been interested in the past few weeks – Yoga, Art, Music... Make that phone call you’ve been avoiding but know you need to make. Push your limits little by little and adopt a view of exploration and curiosity whether your pursuits soar or crash and burn. Know that either way, you’re gaining knowledge and insight. When we learn to identify with the process of trying rather than the outcomes we effect, we adopt a resilience-building approach to life.

Theresa Irving – Guidance Officer

Reference: https://www.verywell.com/
Smoking banned 5 metres around school grounds

Smoking any tobacco products or using an electronic cigarettes within five metres of any state or private school grounds has been banned. This applies before, during and after school hours as well as over weekends and school holidays.

On the spot fines can be issued by environmental health officers, police or other officers authorised by the local government to anyone found in breach of this legislation. The ban does not extend to businesses or residences that share a property boundary with a school.

Smokers are asked to put out your cigarette and dispose of the litter thoughtfully well before you reach the school boundary.

James Cook University and The Museum of Tropical Queensland will be hosting Illumin8 science clubs this year for year 6, 7 & 8 students who love science.
The clubs are a place for students who love science to enjoy weekly science challenges, learn about the world of science, meet real scientists and build friendships with like-minded budding scientists.

Cost will be $10 per student per club event or $120 per student for the entire 15 weeks.

Click on the following link to register your child or for more information contact Brett Wass (JCU STEM officer):

P 0437 227 256
E brett.wass@jcu.edu.au
W https://alumni.jcu.edu.au/STEM

**Date:** The clubs will meet weekly starting on the 12th of April and run through to late August, finishing with a grand challenge.

**Time:** The James Cook University Club will meet on Tuesday after school at 4pm until 5.30pm with afternoon tea provided from 3.30pm.

The Museum of Tropical Queensland club will meet on Saturday mornings from 10am to 12pm with tea break at 11am

**Location:** JCU (Education Central Building 134 Room 132), Townsville Campus

MTQ (meetings to be held in the MTQ annex, left of main entry).

Due to players having injuries and relocating we are in need of some netball players to fill their positions, I was hoping that you could put a note in your morning notices or newsletter?

Marian Vixens are in need of 2 players for Inter B and 2 players for Inter D. 15 - 18 years of age. Games are on Wednesday nights. Please contact Bobby on marianvixensnetballclub@outlook.com or 0497265712