

6 June 2014

Dear Parents / Carers,

At Gloucester High School we are serious about giving our senior students the best possible opportunities for their futures. Parent information evenings, student mentoring programs and study skills training are all examples of the things we do to increase the capacity and achievement of students.

In the same vein, I am happy to announce the introduction of a senior student improvement scheme we call *OPAL*. Many of the ideas within this scheme have been sourced from Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, and I thank them for their generosity in sharing these ideas. *OPAL* stands for *Ongoing Performance Assessment Log*. *OPAL* is a scheme in which each senior student is assessed by his or her teachers each month. Those students who maintain acceptable standards of participation and completion, are rewarded within our existing Merit Scheme. The incentive to maintain, and improve upon, a healthy *OPAL* average is further motivation for most students. For students whose effort and completion rates are causing concern, the *OPAL* system provides for interviews with the Principal, Head Teachers and Year Advisers (and, ultimately, parents and carers) designed to support a change in this behavior and assist students re-build their momentum.

Feedback from other schools who have implemented such programs is overwhelmingly positive. Students know how they are progressing in their subjects. They are motivated by wanting their average to grow, or by wanting to avoid the awkwardness of an interview with the Principal, Head Teachers and parents! Students will receive their personal *OPAL* scores for individual subjects, as well as their *OPAL* Average, at the end of each recording period. Individual student scores will not be shared with other students.

I commend the program to you and anticipate great outcomes for our senior students.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Cavanagh
Principal