

## **COVID-19 Update for Dickson College 13 May 2020**

Dear Students and families,

As you are aware the Minister of Education Yvette Berry announced last week that students will start returning to school with year groups P-2, 7, 11 & 12 returning Monday 18 May. As mentioned in last weeks update there was specific mention on how this return will be handled by Colleges in the following dot point.

- Year 11 and 12 students will attend a combination of on-campus and remote learning, with colleges making arrangements to support learning on-campus for students and subject matters that require it.

As a College we have developed a plan for the rest of term 2 that has considered a range of factors that gets students, staff and families through to the end of semester intact. So that we can operate 'normally' from the beginning of term 3. Top of our considerations are continuity of learning for students, equity as some students will remain at home, wellbeing of our staff, restoring balance to curriculum offerings that do not translate well to the online environment (e.g. practical or specialist areas), and providing room for important activities like a trial AST for Year 12.

Important information on how students will return to Dickson College and how the College will combine online, and support learning on-campus, is detailed below. Over the next few days teachers will be in touch with students to manage online and onsite activities.

### **Social distancing in schools applies to adults not students**

The ACT Education Directorate has sought advice from the ACT Chief Health Officer. This advice was that when schools are fully operational, it is neither practical nor required for students to physically distance. This includes all students between 3-19 years old. As per this advice, the College will not apply the physical distancing requirements on students the same way as it is being enforced outside of school and in the wider community. Schools must however, put measures in place to physically distance adults within the building (e.g. teachers, support staff, visitors, parents etc.). We are currently working on putting arrangements in place for the health and safety of our staff, so that students can begin to return on Monday 18 May. Students are expected to practice good hygiene and the College has plenty of hand sanitiser and soap available.

### **Online/remote learning timetable will remain in place for the rest of the term with additional time allocated on Wednesday for onsite activities**

Currently it is unclear how many of our students will be returning to College on Monday 18 May. To ensure equity for all students online learning will be the core delivery method for classes, as this method ensures that all students have access to the same content no matter where students are learning from. This also ensures that students have access to their teacher if their teacher is working from home due to vulnerabilities or unique circumstances.

From next week the timetable will utilise Wednesdays so that teachers can organise additional onsite activities for students if required. Time onsite will be in two-hour blocks separated by a lunch break. As with other onsite activities, teachers will negotiate these times with students class by class.

### **Support for students when and where they need it**

From Monday 18 May we are expecting that students will be engaging with their learning in various ways:

- Onsite – content offered online but teachers offering support for students requiring it
- Online/Remote – as it has been since week 9 or term 1
- Onsite for practical type activities that are either ‘hands on’ or require specialist facilities
- Onsite – independent, various areas with the college will be open including the Library will be open for students to complete work (see information below)

### **Areas within the College for independent study**

- The College Library will be open 9:30 until 3pm each day
  - Newly renovated Library now has additional room for independent study
  - Numbers will be monitored contingent of staff available to maintain minimal supervision.
- The Canteen will not be operating but the area will be open 9:30 -3pm each day
  - For independent study
  - Access to hot, cold water, microwaves and eating areas

### **Increased tracking of engagement with learning BUT stay home if you are unwell**

Teachers in the College are already using methods for tracking student engagement and participation. Including referrals to Student Wellbeing if they have concerns. From Monday 18 May participation will be recorded so that parents can be alerted by SMS if students are not engaging with their teacher, either online or onsite, on a regular basis. If a student is unwell, they should stay away from school, notify the college of the absence, and complete set work when they recover.

### **AST Trial for Year 12 at the end of the semester**

Now that teachers have adjusted unit outlines for this semester’s assessment due to the COVID-19 lock down, the College will not require three days of testing at the end of this semester. The College will explore scheduling the AST Trial that Year 12 missed in term 1 to the end of this semester period. Students studying to receive an ATAR will be contacted soon about the AST preparation program for this year.

Regards

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