



Students with their certificates from the day, from left, Angus Clark, Isla Hickey, Phil Smith and Eden Free.

## Our future MPs

FOUR students from Leon-gatha Secondary College were privileged to represent the college at the State Constitutional Convention on Tuesday, September 3, at State Parliament in Melbourne.

Angus Clarke, Eden Free, Isla Hickey and Phil Smith discussed, debated and presented on the topic of "Should we abolish the Legislative Council (Upper House) in Victoria?"

Students gained great insights into how to present to a large group and particularly how to complete a prepared and an impromptu speech.

They presented their arguments in the Legislative Assembly, which was presided over by Maree Edwards MP (Deputy Speaker).

The final vote for the proposal was as follows - against: 59, in favour: 10.



Phil Smith lays down the law as the Speaker of the House.

## Get your artwork on a bus

LAST year, Gippsland Women's Health worked with the Department of Education and Training to run a successful poster design competition to challenge gender stereotypes.

Gippsland students at all 76 schools who signed up to the Respectful Relationships initiative were invited to participate.

Ten finalists were chosen from 630 entries.

Their artwork was reproduced to create respectful relationships and gender equality resources for use in schools, as well as being shared widely across Gippsland for 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence, including an exhibition at the Gippsland Art Gallery. Sale.

Students from Gippsland Respectful Relationships schools are again invited to enter the art competition, with the 2019 theme being 'Challenging Gender Stereotypes'.

This year's finalists will have their artwork reproduced on local buses across Gippsland, ensuring these messages are seen.

Students wishing to participate in the region-wide competition must design an original work conveying a clear message that challenges gender stereotypes and/or that we are not limited by our gender. Artwork can include drawing, photography, computer-generated graphics, painting or collage.

If your school, or your child's school, is part of the Respectful Relationships initiative, organisers encourage all students to enter the competition.

Ask your teacher about the competition and collect an entry form from your school or from the Gippsland Women's Health website. The competition closes on September 20, 2019.

"Rigid gender stereotypes and inequality shape poor health outcomes for everyone," said Gippsland Women's Health CEO, Fiona Owen.

"So let's all get on the bus and challenge gender stereotypes and create a fairer and more respectful Gippsland for everyone."

## School attendance matters

A REPORT from the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) reinforces the strong correlation between school attendance and student achievement, and highlights the importance of forming good attendance habits early.

The evidence summary indicates that the overall school attendance picture in Australia is good, with Year 1-10 students attending, on average, 92 per cent of available school days in Australia - a rate comparable to other countries with high performing education systems. The report also identifies

that there remains a notable difference in attendance rates between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students.

In 2018, the overall national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance rate was 82.3 per cent compared to 92.5 per cent for non-Indigenous students. This shows that there is still much more work to do to lift attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Highlighting that 'every day counts' when it comes to attendance, the report rein-

forces the negative correlation between absence from school and achievement, which is cumulative and can affect academic outcomes in future years of schooling.

"While there are many complex issues at play when it comes to school attendance, we shouldn't shy away from the challenges," said AITSL chief executive officer Mark Grant.

"Clearly it is crucially important to involve families and communities in purposeful, authentic and ethical ways to provide students with every opportunity to reach their potential."



Wonthaggi students learnt about Access Melbourne, a program that helps students from rural or regional areas gain entry to undergraduate courses at the university. Each year, 20 per cent of domestic undergraduate places are reserved for Access Melbourne applicants.

## Life as a biomedical scientist

BUDDING scientists from Wonthaggi Secondary College were among sixty Year 10 and 11 students from across regional and rural Victoria to attend the fifth annual Biomedical Sciences Day in Parkville recently.

Local students Caleb, Ruby, Jessica and their teacher Leith Cummins, had a rare opportunity to experience life as biomedical scientists at the event presented by the School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Melbourne, and the Gene Technology Access Centre (GTAC).

Professor Matthew Watt, head of the university's Department of Physiology, encouraged the students to think about the science behind what creates, sustains and threatens people's lives in Australia - and beyond.

He shared his journey to biomedical academia including his laboratory's ground-breaking research into the pathogenesis of fatty liver disease and diabetes.

Professor Watt discussed some of the revolutionary work underway at the School and GTAC including:

- Biological processes - how and why researchers now have a better understanding of

human health;

- 3D printing to replace bones;
- Genomics - new tools for cancer treatments; and
- New vaccines to combat disease.

Students worked alongside researchers in the GTAC laboratories to photograph specimens using light, fluorescence and scanning electron microscopes.

They have entered their images into the university's Under the Microscope competition.

A behind-the-scenes look at the university's Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology uncovered real tissue specimens and historical anatomical models, while a tour of the Virtual Reality Learning Studio let students experience how cutting-edge digital technology is used to study the human body.

Wonthaggi students were fascinated by the immersive experience of the learning studio and finding out about the human heart and how it works.

Current university students also spoke about their courses, the diverse research topics they are pursuing, and life on campus.



Author of 'Skylarking', Kate Mildenhall, gets the thumbs up from Leigh Pouw (left) and Gabriel Pascoe for delivering engaging writing workshops for Newhaven College's Year 8 students, and signing their books!

## Year 8s love Skylarking

NEWHAVEN College Year 8 students were excited to participate in workshops with Kate Mildenhall, the author of 'Skylarking', the text they have been studying as part of a comparative text unit in English classes.

Kate shared her inspiration for writing 'Skylarking', and the blending of fact and fiction in her approach to writing the novel.

Kate also enabled all students in their own creative writing through a series of writing

exercises. She spoke about how just like we warm up when engaging with physical sports, so too we need to warm up when writing.

Students took advantage of Kate being at the College for the day to ask her a range of questions about her intent with 'Skylarking', and also her experiences as a professional writer.

Kate revealed that she has a new book coming out in 2020 and many students will look forward to reading another Kate Mildenhall book next year.