

20 May 2015

Dear Parents and Caregivers

re: **Year 12 Formal 2015**

As you may be aware, our Year 12 Formal is being held at Addington Raceway on Saturday 6 June from **8.00pm to midnight**.

Please Note: Doors open at **7.30pm** and students are expected to be in the venue by **8.30pm** and no later than **8.45pm**

Students will not be permitted to leave until **11.30pm** unless collected by their parent/caregiver

As you are the parents of a student in Year 12 I felt it appropriate to advise you of my views and the school's expectations about such events. Should your son or daughter wish to purchase a ticket/attend, I would ask that you also make them aware of the following.

School Formals or Balls are, for many students, the highlight of the social calendar during their final years at school. The Burnside High School Formals have a tradition of being fun, well organised events which celebrate much that is good about being a member of the Burnside High School community.

I support these celebratory events and trust that they will remain a feature of the school calendar over the years ahead.

The safety of our young people is paramount when we consider what the formal should be and how it is to be organised. Our aim is to have a positive and fun celebration in a controlled and drug and alcohol free environment.

Currently outside partners from other schools are able to attend. As it can be difficult to follow up with outsiders should concerns arise, the onus is put on our students (who invite outsiders) to ensure they conduct themselves in keeping with the school's expectations. They are responsible for their partner.

The following expectations must be met:

- It is not automatically the 'right' of any student to attend the Formal, but a privilege which may be withdrawn by the Principal should students fail to meet the school's expectations in terms of behaviour and/or attendance.
- The school Bylaws apply with respect to general conduct.
- The school Bylaws apply with respect to tobacco, alcohol, and other unlawful or dangerous drugs/substances.

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- Students are expected to advise partners, who are not students of the school, of the school's Bylaws. These regulations apply to partners on the occasion of the formal.
- The school's responsibility for students begins when they enter the venue of the formal and ceases as the students leave the venue.
- The school reserves the right to refuse admission to any student, or to the partner of any student, who has not met the standards outlined in the Bylaws; whose attire is not of the expected standard; or who shows signs of having taken alcohol or drugs. Where admission is refused, no refund will be given.
- The school does not support, nor does it organise, nor is it able to take any responsibility for, any pre-formal or post-formal functions.

Note: The Board supports the view of the school management team that all students should be breath tested at the time of entry to the venue. We have taken this stance for several reasons. First, because the consumption of alcohol before school dances has proven to be a problem confronting schools throughout the country. The school and Board is assuming a leadership role in this regard. Secondly, there is the very important issue of student and staff safety. Thirdly, we believe that students need to realise that a good, fun time can be experienced without the consumption of alcohol. It is important for students to be on time to the formal. Late arrival, which could be seen as a way of avoiding being tested for alcohol consumption, may also result in entry being denied.

With regards After Formal functions, these pose a far greater area of concern in my view. My wish would be that the formal would be, in itself, enough of a celebration and that following the formal students would return home, or perhaps gather in small groups in supervised homes to reflect on the occasion. I would encourage parents to take a similar view.

The school can not and does not support large events after the Formal and will work with the local authorities to limit these. We are not in a position to help organise or supervise such events if they do occur.

While some will argue that it is none of the school's business, my worst fear is that after such an event students may be involved in incidents or misadventure which will put the students at risk and certainly be linked back to the school.

I trust that this clarifies my, the Board's and the school's position. Our aim is to maintain these highlight occasions, while hoping to ensure a safe and enjoyable evening. Your support in this regard is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely



Phil Holstein
Principal