



Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Dear Students, Parents and Newcomb Secondary College Community Members,

### **Pathways in Technology (PTECH) Announcement Today**

As you will probably be aware, Prime Minister Tony Abbott, together with Assistant Minister for Education and Training Simon Birmingham and Federal Member for Corangamite Sarah Henderson visited Newcomb Secondary College this morning. Protocols surrounding a visit of this magnitude meant that information was unable to be circulated ahead of time.

Our guests visited a Year 8 Science Classroom where students were conducting an experiment before returning to our library where the Prime Minister made the announcement that Newcomb Secondary College will be one of only two pilot sites in the whole of Australia for the development of a Pathways in Technology College. This is an initiative commenced at a school in New York, USA and is often shortened to PTECH to aid communication. You may have seen or heard it being reported in that manner.

This type of educational environment places emphasis on supporting students towards qualifications that better prepare them for their futures in the real world of work. Pathways in Technology places emphasis on the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) skills that are recognised as being important within future growth industries. It does this in collaboration with many employers and with further and higher education institutions. It was terrific today that quite a number of major employers and key stakeholders in Geelong were also present for the announcement and showed their support for the initiative.

We know that students now and students in the future will require high levels of skill to be competitive in the emerging employment market. We know that these skills require formal learning after transitioning from school. That could include University, TAFE and Apprenticeships or a flexible pathway that includes more than one of these. We know that employment prospects are not equal across all industries; some industries and occupations may decline in number while others emerge and flourish. At Newcomb Secondary College we hope to partner with employers and further and higher education institutions to actively support our students' prospects. This will be by enhancing their qualifications and real life work experiences so that they emerge into adult life with options for further study and/or attractive employment that leaves them advantaged in this competitive world.

The language of 'pathways' is, as you would know, something that is already embedded in our work here at Newcomb Secondary College. Our active links with the major tertiary institutions in Geelong is something that allows us the opportunity to build from a very well-known and valued program structure. In fact our Year 9 Program (now called Geelong Tertiary Futures) has already been expanded to three other schools in Geelong with the support of the State Government through 'Skilling the Bay'.

As the attention around the announcement subsides a little, we expect to move into a planning phase that will allow us to develop the partnerships with major employers and develop the training programs that will allow Newcomb Secondary College students enhanced and unique opportunities to develop their own career and employment potential.

I would expect that we will be able to provide all of the Newcomb Secondary College community with updates as this exciting development unfolds and takes shape. In the meantime students and parents, who have a desire for further information, may like to visit <http://www.ptech.org/#/> where there is a video clip of U.S. President Obama supporting the concept in his State of the Union address in 2013.

This is an exciting time for us all.



Using our logo of the Seahorse and Anchor as a base, we want to be grounded and real like the **anchor** but forward looking like the **seahorse**. In developing powerful and sustainable partnerships with industry and tertiary institutions we can, together with the aspirational and determined efforts of our students, model ...

## Creating Positive Futures

I will work to ensure that the community is regularly updated as we progress in this exciting initiative.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Honeywell". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light grey, textured background.

Phil Honeywell  
Principal