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From the Director of Learning and Wellbeing

Throughout Term 3, curriculum has been a major focus across all three campuses at Concordia College.

Our recent International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme Evaluation occurred across our St John's and Concordia campuses, and this has given us an important opportunity to critically reflect on what we do well and what we can continue to strengthen. The evaluation team found that both our Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Middle Years Programme (MYP) show close alignment with the IB Standards and Practices, and particularly affirmed our holistic approach to education, our commitment to student wellbeing and inclusion, and the quality of learning experiences across the College.

A key focus of our recent Professional Learning Days was the coherence of our curriculum. This refers to how the curriculum at each year level connects as a whole, and how we deliberately build on the knowledge and understanding students have developed previously to prepare them for what comes next. A coherent curriculum is more than simply having a list of learning intentions for each year level and subject. It means building knowledge cumulatively and intentionally, so that students encounter important learning with the foundations they need to be successful. Strategically, this allows students to engage in increasingly rigorous and sophisticated learning as they move through the College, because each new stage of learning

builds on what has come before. For us, curriculum coherence is therefore about asking some important questions: What do we want every student to know and be able to do? What foundations do they need before they can access more complex learning? And how do we ensure that learning builds meaningfully from one year level to the next? This work is about being deliberate and consistent about the essential learning we want for every student, maximising opportunities for every learner.

Alongside this curriculum work, key wellbeing staff came together across our Professional Learning Days for a strategic conversation about student wellbeing. We recognise that learning and wellbeing are deeply connected, and we asked ourselves some critical questions about our current approaches and how we might continue to develop student wellbeing. This reflects our broader commitment to considering learning, wellbeing and their role in developing the whole person together.

Professional Learning Days provide an important opportunity to step out of the day-to-day rhythm of school and create space for these conversations. While we recognise that these days can create additional challenges for families, the time they provide for our staff to learn together, reflect honestly on our practice and engage in strategic conversations about the future of Concordia is an important investment in our students. The work undertaken on these days is not simply professional learning for its own sake; it is about strengthening the experiences our students have in our classrooms and ensuring that we continue to grow as a learning community.

We are grateful to our staff for the thought and energy they bring to this work, and to our families for supporting the time and space needed to do it well.

Mathew Disher

Director of Learning & Wellbeing ELC–12

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Q&A with Tarsh Boyko, Careers and Pathways Advisor

1. Where were you before this and what persuaded you to join Concordia?

I was born and raised in Melbourne, but in January this year I moved my life to Adelaide from regional Victoria (Shepparton) where I had been living since 2001. After a career in Public Relations/Marketing/Event Management, I commenced teaching in 2012 at a wonderful state secondary school, Wanganui Park. This school was merged with three other secondary schools in 2020, and I worked in this ‘super school’—Greater Shepparton Secondary College—until December 2025. Although making the move to Adelaide was huge, deciding to join Concordia was easy. I was looking for a school that genuinely cared for its students, embraced and supported its staff, valued the role of the Careers Practitioner in supporting students and was surrounded by trees and gardens.

2. Three words to describe you.

Passionate, loyal, hardworking.

3. What is your motivation or inspiration in your role?

Seeing a student discover their pathway or realise there really is a career for 'that thing' they love to do is definitely inspiring. It is a privilege to be part of a student's journey, working with them to help uncover what it is they want to do and finding pathways to help them achieve their dreams.

4. If you had a superpower, what would it be?

If I could choose a superpower, it would be the ability to add more hours to the day—I am always super busy, so a bit of extra time each day would enable me to tick off a few more items on the To Do List!

5. Who would you invite to a dinner party of six guests and why? Alternatively, tell us something you might like to share that we could not possibly know?

Something about me that you wouldn't know—I love to cook! It calms me and makes me smile. I love the planning, shopping and prepping, but most importantly making food to share with others. This makes me really happy.

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Book Week 2026

What better way to celebrate Book Week than with a 'Symphony of Stories'? This year, our libraries were filled with stories, music, creativity, laughter and plenty of excitement as students and staff came together to celebrate the wonderful world of books.

One of the highlights of our week was a very special visit from acclaimed Australian author and illustrator Gabrielle Wang. Gabrielle shared some of the stories and experiences that have inspired her writing, giving students an insight into how authors turn ideas, memories and experiences into stories. She spoke thoughtfully about racism and reminded students that many of us, or our families, have connections to other countries and cultures. Her message encouraged students to think about our shared experiences and the importance of understanding and celebrating diversity.

Gabrielle also brought her stories to life by showing students how to draw a dragon. Students followed along, creating their own magnificent dragons and having plenty of fun in the process!

Throughout Book Week, students also took part in a variety of competitions and activities in and around the libraries. Some of these activities included making scratch bookmarks, participating in scavenger hunts, dancing at silent discos and looking for their next read at our Book Fair. The Book Week activities provided opportunities for students to get creative, test their knowledge and, most importantly, have fun with books.

Of course, no Book Week celebration would be complete without the much-anticipated Book

Week Parade! Students and staff dressed up as their favourite book character or came as a musician, bringing the 'Symphony of Stories' theme to life.

Book Week is a wonderful reminder that stories come in many forms. They can be found in books, music, art, dance, memories and in the experiences we share with one another. This year, our libraries became places where all these stories come together to create our own symphony of stories.

A huge thank you to our students, staff, families and everyone who helped make Book Week 2026 such a memorable celebration of reading, imagination and creativity!

Nolene Thiele

Resource Manager – St John's Campus

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