

Kia

Wonju, Wonju Beeliar Boodj Boodjar

Hello and welcome to the land of the Beeliar People.

June and July of each year symbolises one of the six seasons the Nyungar people use; that is Makuru – the season of fertility.

I acknowledge the Whadjup people of the Nyungar Nation the traditional custodians of the land on which we are gathered today and I pay my respect to their Elders both past, present and emerging and I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are with us today.

I acknowledge:

- Mr Alan Brown, Principal, Lakeland Senior High School;
- Teachers and other staff;
- Mr Brad Stone, Board Chairperson and other members of the Board here today;
- Ms Caroline Kirk, Local Aboriginal leader;
- Ms Dawn Ugle, Aboriginal Leader;
- Primary school students from the School's catchment zone;
- Former students;
- My wife Patricia;
- Students; and
- Families and friends of the School Community;

The forthcoming NAIDOC week celebrations are an important part of Australia's calendar

The theme for 2019 NAIDOC Week is; **VOICE. TREATY. TRUTH. –**

Let's work together for a shared future.

Adding to this is 2019 United Nations Year of Indigenous Languages, a time to reflect on the importance of maintaining and in some cases re-discovering the hundreds of our first nation people's languages or dialects.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have asked us all to walk with them in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

The Indigenous voice of this country is over 65,000 plus years old.

They are the first words spoken on this continent.

Languages, passed down lore, culture and knowledge for over 60,000 thousand years.

They are precious to our nation.

It's that Indigenous voice that include know-how, practices, skills and innovations - found in a wide variety of contexts, such as agricultural, scientific, technical, ecological and medicinal fields, as well as biodiversity-related knowledge.

They are words connecting us to country, an understanding of country and of a people who are the oldest continuing culture on the planet.

Our first nation people say that as we celebrate the United Nations International Year of Indigenous Languages, it's time for our knowledge to be heard through our voice.

They say for generations, they have sought recognition of their unique place in Australian history and society as we know it today.

We need to be the architects of our lives and futures.

For generations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have looked for significant and lasting change.

Voice. Treaty. Truth. were three key elements to the reforms set out in the Uluru Statement from the Heart. These reforms represent the unified position of First Nation Australians.

Today, the City of Cockburn continues to acknowledge and respect the first nation people and the difference they make to all that happens in Australia.

The City of Cockburn was amongst the first local governments in Australia to introduce a reconciliation action plan in 2011 and I believe the first to fully fund the initiatives outlined the plan.

At that time, the Council believed it was pointless to place words on paper without a full commitment to implementing the plan that had been agreed to by our Aboriginal Elders as a way forward in a shared journey where we walked side by side, shoulder to shoulder to re-conciliation.

The City has now adopted its third and most comprehensive Reconciliation Action Plan and working to achieve the stated goals.

Today I have been asked to speak briefly about my role as mayor.

From a legislative perspective, under the Local Government Act 1995 my role is to:

- presides at meetings in accordance with this Act;
- provides leadership and guidance to the community in the district;
- carries out civic and ceremonial duties on behalf of the local government;
- speaks on behalf of the local government;
- performs such other functions as are given to the mayor by this Act or any other written law; and
- liaises with the CEO on the local government's affairs and the performance of its functions.

I achieve this by:

- Investing time by being out & about in the community;
- Liaising with the business community;
- Liaising with members of the diplomatic corps, schools, faith groups, cultural organisations, service clubs, community & sporting clubs, chaplaincy councils etc;
- Attending primary and secondary school graduation ceremonies, special assemblies, sporting events, representations on school

boards, fund raising events, musical performances, stage productions presentations to classrooms on the role of local government and the mayor, participate in ANZAC Day services, participate in the opening of new schools and the opening of extensions to school buildings, Sunshine Radio visits to schools, addressing parking issues, participating in grants to schools through the council process, talking to parents, guardians & carers, participating on chaplaincy councils. etc; ANZAC Day services, Hiroshima Day Commemorative Service etc.

- Supporting our volunteers;
- Opening civic buildings ie the Cockburn ARC (May 2017), Cockburn Bowling & Recreation Club (September 2018), Hockey and Sporting Complex (August 2019); \
- Of course many of you will participate in activities out of school with sporting clubs, drama clubs etc. Pat and I are often at games and attending awards nights at the end of season etc. well we're down at Gibson Park on Saturdays.
- Pioneers' annual luncheon;
- Lobbying for funding at State, & federal government level
- See can also see a list of my membership on Council website.

One place where you won't see me is social media – people often say why aren't you on Facebook; to which my reply is generally that Pat & I prefer to meet people 'face to face' and engagement in conversation.

In closing, your school's motto of 'Strive to Achieve' however it is important to always remember to:

- Respect yourself;
- Respect your family;
- Respect you friends
- Respect your school community;
- Respect your community and those that you visit; and
- Always contribute to whatever you do to your best ability, to the best of your ability.

Thank you.