

At Clarkson Community High School we are committed to providing an inclusive school environment that is safe, engaging and supportive for our students. Developing student engagement, resiliency and academic inquiry is the focus of our Invitational Education philosophy and the driving influence in all areas of school improvement for 2015. Our Invitational Education philosophy ensures that People, Programs, Policies, Procedures and Places in a school are all being considered when we are developing programs for the whole child. In 2014 we developed a strong focus on data collection and analysis to ensure that our programs and procedures are value-adding for all students at Clarkson. In 2015 we will continue this successful data emphasis, but also will improve our school's physical environment to welcome and engage our transition Year 7 and 8 students and to value-add in other areas of each child's development.

It is fundamentally important that students are invited by our school to flourish and we will provide a physical environment that encourages students to view school as an enjoyable and challenging environment. To foster this goal we have constructed an outdoor nature playscape for our younger students to provide greater opportunity for physical play and interaction. Research indicates that playscapes provide opportunity for unique sensory stimulation and complex physical activity and shows that children who engage in outdoor play are more attentive in learning and less obese. Physical, social, emotional and psychological well-being are all positively affected by play.

A central goal of encouraging play will be to build student resilience. Play has always been an important part of childhood experience and personal development. Play self-evidently assists children with social, emotional and cognitive development and motor skills. It also assists with helping students manage stress and become more resilient.

“In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social cultural and physical resources that sustain their well being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.” <http://www.resilienceresearch.org>

John Hattie is a strong believer in the beneficial effect of student voice and elements of student control in daily learning; as long as student control is over relevant choices. Play is clearly one of those choices. We believe that our playscape will create a strong positive effect on learning by fostering resilience built through play and challenge outside the classroom.

We are looking forward to welcoming our Year 7 and 8 students into a vibrant and engaging learning environment and continuing a strong tradition of school improvement and development to meet the needs of all of our students.