Gleneagles Secondary College is consulting the school community regarding our potential, future involvement in the National School Chaplaincy & Student Welfare Program. This program was previously known as the National School Chaplaincy Program.

Full details about the program can be found at http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSchoolChaplaincyProgram/Pages/ProgramExtensionExpansion.aspx

A one page summary is provided below:

**Why is the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program important?**
The preamble to the 2008 *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* states:

*Schools play a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation’s ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. Schools share this responsibility with students, parents, carers, families, the community, business and other education and training providers.*

It is an Australian Government, voluntary program that assists schools and their communities to support the spiritual, social and emotional wellbeing of their students. This can include support and guidance about ethics, values, relationships, spirituality and enhancing engagement with the broader community.

**How will this program benefit the school community?**
The program provides wellbeing support to the whole school community including students, teachers, parents and staff. Under the revised program guidelines, schools are able to access the funding to provide the services that best support their individual school community. For example, the services of a chaplain may be used or alternatively, a youth worker or other secular support staff could be appointed under the program from 2012.

**What is changing under the extension and expansion of the program?**
A number of changes are being implemented to strengthen current arrangements. These are:

- Schools will be allowed to choose whether they wish to employ a chaplain or a secular student welfare worker;
- New minimum qualification requirements for all new chaplains and student welfare workers will be introduced. The minimum qualification will be a Certificate IV in Youth Work, Pastoral Care or equivalent.
- Minimum provider standards to ensure increased national consistency and accountability measures will be introduced.
- The complaints procedures will be amended to strengthen management processes and transparency and complaints procedures.
- The maximum grant for schools in remote locations will be increased to $24,000 per year to reflect the higher cost of delivering services in these areas.

**How much funding will my school receive?**
Schools can receive a maximum of $60,000 over 3 years to establish or expand chaplaincy/student welfare work services to the school community. This will support the delivery of a minimum of 400 hours of chaplain/student welfare worker service over each year.

**What services will the new program provide through the student welfare workers?**
The key tasks of a student welfare worker will vary depending on the needs of the individual school and their communities. This may include, but not be limited to: assisting school counsellors and wellbeing staff in the delivery of student welfare services, supporting students to explore their spirituality and providing guidance about spiritual, values and ethical matters; and facilitating access to professional support in the community.

As with chaplains, student welfare workers are not permitted to:

- attempt to convert students to religion through proselytising/evangelising; and/or
- provide professional support services unless appropriately qualified and agreed by the school community.
GLENEAGLES SECONDARY COLLEGE PROPOSAL

- The College proposes to apply for funding under the National School Chaplaincy & Student Welfare Program.
- In consideration of the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of the members of the school community, the College would use the available funding to employ a suitably qualified student welfare worker.
- All available funds provided through this program would be used to employ a student welfare worker and the College may consider supplementing the grant through its normal budget processes.
- The student welfare worker would work closely with the College’s wellbeing team to provide additional support for our students. The student welfare worker would report to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator and the Assistant Principal (Student Management & Wellbeing)

Consultation Process

1. Information about the program and the consultation process to be
   - mailed to all families of students enrolled at the College
   - emailed to all College employees
   - posted on the College website
   - provided to the Student Voice group

2. Feedback sought from the school community by email to the College email account gleneagles.sc@edumail.vic.gov.au or by mail to P.O. Box 185, Endeavour Hills 3802 by October 21st, 2011 and through Student Voice.

3. The feedback to be presented to the Gleneagles Secondary College Council at its meeting on October 24th, 2011

4. Council to consider the proposal and feedback. Council would reach a decision on whether to apply to participate in the program

Questions that may form the basis of feedback

a. Do you support Gleneagles Secondary College’s participation in the National School Chaplaincy & Student Welfare Program?
b. Do you believe the College would benefit by having additional suitably qualified staff to support our students?
c. Do you support the College’s proposal to use any funds obtained through this program, to employ a student welfare worker?
d. Would you prefer a Chaplain to be employed under the program?
e. Any comments in support of the program?
f. Any concerns or questions about the program?