28th September, 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA) Test for Year 8 students will be held on Tuesday 11th November 2014. The test takes approximately 80 minutes. The test is an interactive, multimedia test completed entirely on a computer. It is called ESSA online.

ESSA online contains multiple choice, short response and extended response tasks that are grouped around real-world issues, including scientific investigations. This is a diagnostic test, with tasks framed on Stage 4 outcomes and essential content in the NSW Science Years 7-10 Syllabus.

Students will be tested on their:

- Knowledge and understanding of Science
- Understanding and skills in the process of scientific investigation
- Ability to evaluate evidence, make judgments and think critically
- Ability to access information and communicate scientific ideas

Students also complete a survey about their opinions, attitudes and values.

Since students complete ESSA online on a computer, each student needs to bring **headphones or earbuds** that plug into a school computer. Earbuds for an iPod or portable player are suitable. Please make sure the computers are fully charged the night before the test.

If your child has learning needs that require special consideration or has been educated in English for less than one year, please contact the College to discuss special provisions or possible exemption from the test.

Results of the test will be available during Term 1 2015. Information about each student is treated confidentially and held securely to ensure that the right to privacy of all students is maintained. A personal report for each student will be sent to parents/carers to describe the science knowledge and skills demonstrated by your son in the test. There will also be information about how your child’s results compare with overall performance of all students in the test. You will be invited to complete a parent survey about the test and science learning.

The Principal is able to provide you with more details about the ESSA program if you require additional information.

Yours sincerely,

MR S YEOMANS
SCIENCE COORDINATOR