



**ST NARSAI**  
**ASSYRIAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**

IN HIM WE GROW

# HARP OF THE SPIRIT

## From the Principal



**“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”  
 Luke 2:14**

Dear Parents, Students and Friends,

As I reflect back to the 2023 school year and considering the pleasing progress made by our wonderful students in every area, I can't help but to be proud of the community of St. Narsai Assyrian Christian College for what we have achieved together this year.

Together we have been able to meet the high expectation we set for ourselves at the start of the year. The meticulous planning and work by our staff and the leadership team resulted in significant improvements across all areas of the day-to-day operations at the college, particularly the significant academic progress made by the vast majority of our students this year. This was evident through college internal assessments and the great NAPLAN results achieved by our students this year.

As we look forward to this joyous Christmas season, I take this opportunity to thank His Eminence, Mar Meelis Zaia AM for his wise leadership and support throughout this year. I also would like to acknowledge His Grace, Mar Benyamin Elya for his support and leadership in strengthening the spiritual growth of our students at all levels in 2023.

My appreciation also goes to all staff members for their dedication and hard work in support of our students and their families throughout this year. I particularly, would like to thank our Middle leaders' team, and members of the St. Narsai College Executive team.

Finally, I want to express my thanks to members of the St. Narsai Parents & Friends Association for their fundraising efforts this year.

ISSUE 3 | TERM 4

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Thank you to everyone who attended our wonderful End of Year Presentation last Wednesday evening at Edessa Hall and I extend my congratulations to all award winners across years 7 to 11. I also take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge all college students for their efforts and commitments to their studies throughout 2023 and you the parents for your support throughout 2023.

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To all our wonderful families, I wish you a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a pleasant holiday. I look forward to working with you again in 2024.

**Thank you,**

**Edwar Dinkha**

# HARP OF THE SPIRIT

## From the Deputy Principal (Curriculum)

### **Dear Parents, Students and Friends of the College Community**

With this being the last newsletter for 2023, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support. Students and teachers have worked very hard and a great deal has been achieved and I congratulate them on their efforts and achievements.

Years 7-10 End of Year reports were emailed to all parents last week. If you have not received your child's digital report, please contact our office staff by email at [info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au).

### **Textbooks**

In preparation for 2024, all students have been given lists of books that they need to purchase. The lists are available on the College website <https://stnarsai.nsw.edu.au/downloads/#booklists>

All books need to be ordered through Endeavor Education before end of this year to ensure that they are delivered in time for the commencement of the 2024 school year.

### **Office holiday hours**

The College office will be open on Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th January from 9am-3pm to answer any questions or enquiries in person or on the phone. Alternatively, you can email us at [info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au). All emails received will be responded to from the dates above.

I wish all our students, their families, staff and the community a Merry Christmas. I pray that this season of the Nativity of our Lord is full of joy and blessings. I thank you for your ongoing support throughout 2023 and look forward to working with all parents and students in 2024.

**Mrs. Mary Khina**

**Deputy Principal – Curriculum / Teaching and Learning**

# HARP OF THE SPIRIT

## From the Deputy Principal (Wellbeing)

### **I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ~ 2 Timothy 4:7**

Are we really near the end of the 2023 school year already? It is amazing how quickly time has passed.

This year was another year of growth for our College – physically, spiritually, mentally and academically. We, as Paul the Apostle writes in the bible verse mentioned above, have fought a good fight, we have finished the course, we have kept the faith. I take this opportunity to thank you, the parents and carers for your support this year as you always have.

### **PREPARING FOR 2024**

With 2023 coming to an end, it won't be too long before the 2024 school year begins. A few things to keep in mind to prepare for 2024:

- Ensure that students have purchased all necessary equipment to be effective learners, textbooks, notebooks, pens, pencils, rulers, calculators, textbooks, laptops, folders, plastic sleeves etc. The 2024 booklist is available on our website <https://stnarsai.nsw.edu.au/downloads/> under 'downloads'.
- All lockers require a lock. Students were instructed to remove their locks at the end of the term. Any locks that remain will be cut off during the holidays. Please ensure your child has a lock for their locker upon commencing the 2024 school year.
- At the last school assembly, Year 10 students moving into Stage 6 Preliminary Course (Year 11) were informed they are required to wear their sports uniform for all carnivals (swimming, athletics, St Narsai Day, and sporting competitions) in 2024 and 2025. Year 10 students are to keep their sports uniforms.
- All students must have the St Narsai College maroon school bag. Other bags are not accepted.
- Ensure all students are prepared with the correct full school uniform by not waiting for the last week to purchase the required items of clothing. The full school uniform is available at LOWES (Stocklands Shopping Centre, Wetherill Park) Please be reminded only black, leather shoes are permitted as school shoes and sport shoes are predominantly black or white. Please refer to the student diary for details on uniform requirements.
- Upon returning to school, girls are to have natural nails, no colour or acrylics are permitted. Boys are to be clean shaven and haircuts need to be at College standard. That is, blended, with a minimum of 1 on the sides and not long at the top (above the eyes)
  - no lines (known as tiger marks or tracks) are accepted
  - no eyebrow cuts are accepted
  - boys are not permitted to have a piercing and double piercings on girls are not permitted.

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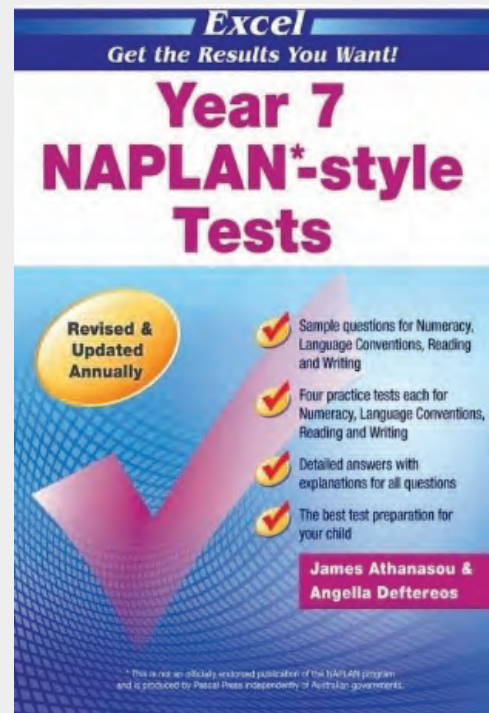
Multiple piercings are to be removed prior to returning to school in 2024.

- girls skirts are to be knee length (a good measure is that the skirt covers the entire knee when seated).

• Year 7 2024 and Year 9 for 2024 – in preparation for NAPLAN, use some time in the holidays to do some practice papers. It would be a good idea to purchase NAPLAN exercise books from newsagencies and complete the tasks as practice.

• Lexia, Maths Online and EduPerfect are online programs every student can access and it helps them improve upon their literacy and/or numeracy skills. Ensure your child is completing tasks every day.

• Please ensure your child spends time with family as well as maintaining an active, healthy lifestyle. For example, going for walks, bike riding, playing sports etc



• Parents and Carers – consider reducing the amount of screen time your child is using. Too much screen time can impair brain structure and function; it can cause obesity, insomnia, mood swings, and even problems at school. Because children's brains undergo so much change during their formative years, this excess screen time can be even more damaging. Research shows that allowing children to spend too much time with their screens can cause a host of negative effects. These include:

o Obesity: When children are inactive, staring at their screens, they are not burning calories. This sedentary lifestyle can cause them to gain weight.

o Sleep disturbances: Looking at screens before bed can disrupt sleep cycles. The blue light from those screens interferes with the brain's sleep cycle and can cause insomnia.

o Bullying or other behaviour problems: Children who spend over two hours per day on their screens often have attention problems. Too much TV watching has also been linked to bullying.

o Academic problems: Children who spend too much time on their screens have also been shown to do worse on academic testing.

o Propensity for violence: Children who are exposed to violent media, such as movies, music and video games, can become desensitized to violence. They may imitate what they see on TV, or even try to use violence to solve their problems.

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## IMPORTANCE OF READING

During these holidays we encourage every student to read on a daily basis. A minimum of 20 minutes every day can have a tremendous impact on a child's literacy development.

Why should your child read?

### 1. Reading is good for your brain

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body." Scientific studies show that reading does make you smarter. Reading a novel, for example, increases the blood flow and improves connectivity in the brain.

### 2. Reading introduces you to new ideas and invites you to solve problems

Your child's analytical thinking is stimulated merely from reading. Reading helps you detect patterns, solve problems, and assimilate new information as if you were living in the characters' shoes.

### 3. Reading makes you a better writer

When you read, your brain absorbs good writing techniques and vocabulary. In your own writing, you will unconsciously copy the writing styles of books that held your attention. Reading also enhances your vocabulary and spelling. New words appear in their natural context and you can deduce meaning from the surrounding words, while visually imprinting their spelling for accurate recall.

### 4. Reading improves your conversational skills

Because reading increases your vocabulary and your knowledge of how to correctly use new words, reading helps you articulate what you want to say. The knowledge you gain from reading also gives you lots to talk about with others.

### 5. Reading strengthens worldview

Reading broadens your understanding of the world as you see things from different perspectives. It is important to be up-to-date with current world issues too!

### 6. Reading improves your self-discipline and consistency

With the modern barrage of media and instant technological information, our attention spans are getting shorter and shorter. Reading a book, unlike skimming a web page, forces you to focus. To get the most out of a story, you must fixate on the plot and complete the book. In doing this, your brain forms deep connections and practices concentration.

### 7. Reading increases your knowledge of history

Reading can teach you historical politics, customs, cultures, economics, and intellect. Often these facts are set in a context of a story, making history easy to remember.

### 8. Reading increases cultural knowledge (without an expensive plane flight)

Reading books set in cultures different from our own provides knowledge of those cultures and the emotional and spiritual lives of the people who live there.

**HERE'S  
WHY YOU  
SHOULD BE  
READING  
MORE  
BOOKS!**



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## **9. Reading challenges your imagination**

As you read, you put yourself in the characters' shoes. Your brain goes beyond the words on the page, imagining details such as appearances, emotions, and surroundings

## **10. Reading increases your skill in an area of interest**

Reading about your specific field or interests can improve your success in your field. You'll gain factual knowledge and learn from others' experiments and mistakes.

## **11. Reading inspires you**

Reading a good book is like being around an inspiring person. You observe inspiring actions, feel contagious passion, and desire to live a better life.

## **12. Reading reduces stress**

Reading about something you enjoy or losing yourself in a good novel is an excellent way to relax. It can ease tension in your muscles and allows you to take a break.

As you can see, reading is good for you – very, very good for you. It can improve your academic, social, physical, and mental life. With these persuasive facts running through your mind, it's the perfect time to dive into your 2021 reading goals!

I take this opportunity to wish each and every family the merriest of Christmases and the happiest of new years. May the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ bring blessings to you all.

I look forward to fighting the good fight, finishing the course and keeping the faith with you in 2024.

God bless you always.

**Mrs M Ismail**

**Deputy Principal – Wellbeing**

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## From the HSIE Department

### **Dear family and friends of St Narsai Assyrian Christian College,**

As we approach the end of the year, it is a great opportunity to reflect on what has been a busy and fruitful year for both staff and learners alike. Term 4 consisted of a variety of academic activities and initiatives to ensure active engagement for our learners and opportunities for them to achieve their personal best.

During Week 7, we celebrated National Geography Week. It is an event that holds immense significance for high school students as it serves as a gateway to understanding the world. It goes beyond maps and capitals, offering a comprehensive view of cultures, economies, environments, and societies. Exploring national geography fosters global awareness, critical thinking, and a sense of interconnectedness, vital in a rapidly evolving world. Students participated in various activities, such as Trivia, Guessing Competitions and Scavenger Hunt. Congratulations to all the participants and winners.

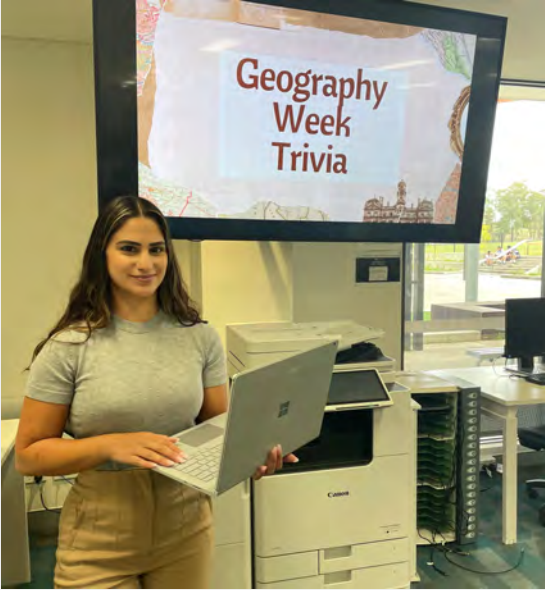
This term in year 9 Commerce, students have been focusing on understanding the process of promoting and selling. They studied the strategies companies utilise to increase brand awareness and the factors they consider and implement to differentiate their products. Some instances include advertising, special promotions and sponsorship. They collectively became aware of ethical and unethical practices that aid consumers in the real world and help steer away from companies that exploit their workers, the environment or partake in child labour.

Year 9 engaged in the depth study of World War II. Learners had the opportunity to expand their historical skills and apply them throughout various activities while learning and understanding the significance and events of the wars. Embedded within the activities were literacy skills which ensured learners were continuously developing and improving their writing skills. Through the analysis of sources, learners were able to form an empathetic understanding of the role of Australians at war. They were able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the significance of war through the commemoration of Remembrance Day.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Year 12 on completing their HSC exams. I have no doubt they will be successful in all their endeavours after school and their results will make the community proud. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed Feast of the Nativity and a prosperous new year. I look forward to writing to you all again in 2024.



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God bless,  
Miss Sandy Nona,  
HSIE Coordinator.



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## From the CAPA Department

This term has been full of excitement for CAPA.

Firstly, a big welcome back to Mrs Arbella Karim who has returned from maternity leave and is working part time this term. Mrs Karim started the term by preparing the Year 8 and 10 students for their exams and she is now working with them on new exciting practical activities. Secondly, we were overjoyed at the news that one of our Year 12 Visual Arts students was nominated by NESA for the Art Express Visual Arts HSC Showcase. Congratulations to Nardeen Dawood for the nomination of her Body of Work "Waves of Blue Dreams". The work is a collection of 890 3D-printed triangular prisms of different sizes and angles. These are mounted on three boards and sprayed in tints and shades of white, blue, and grey. The design of the artwork gives the impression of the movement of rough ocean waves.



After finishing their Yearly Exams, our Year 7 and 8 students along with the Year 9 and 10 Elective Art classes have been working on different artistic works which will keep them busy for the rest of the term.

Year 7 – Pop Art canvas paintings: a portrait plus two other images representing current Popular Culture.

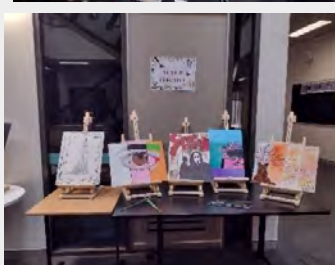
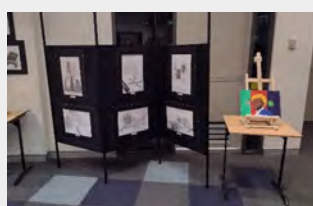
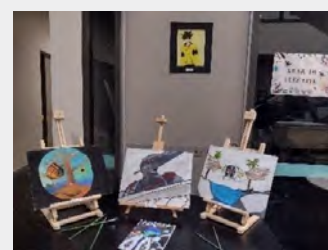
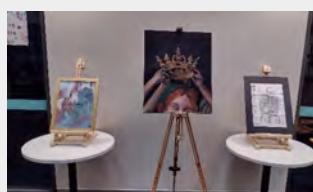
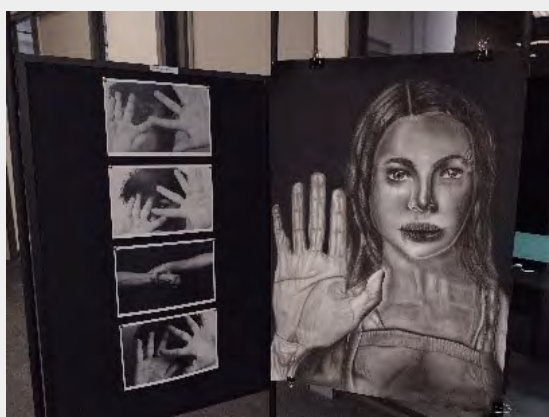
Year 8 – Aboriginal Art paintings and lino printing

Year 9 – Portraiture through drawing, watercolour painting and acrylic painting

Year 10 – A themed Body of Work consisting of three pieces using water colours, acrylic paint and alcohol ink.

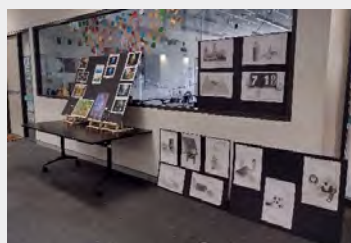
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On Thursday in Week 8 we celebrated our students' artistic achievements with an Art Exhibition held in D block. This was an exciting event which hasn't been held in years, partly due to Covid, so it was lovely to have the Art spaces opened up and members of our community viewing the works on display.



The other exciting event this term was the introduction of **TUESDAY TUNES**.

What started as a fortnightly music concert grew to a weekly event each Tuesday at lunch time. Students and staff have enjoyed the live music emerging from the Performance Workshop of D block and seeing their fellow students and some of the teachers performing. Thank you to staff and students for your support and encouragement of this event. A big thank you to Mrs Nancy Boulos for initiating and organising this event and to the students and staff for sharing their musical gifts with the community.





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With Christmas fast approaching, our school choir and band have been busy practicing for the following events:

- Tuesday 5th December - Raza
- Wednesday 6th December - Presentation night at Edessa Hall
- Saturday 9th December- Horsley Park Carols

As the year draws to a close, I am so thankful for the amazing staff who have supported this department this year: Mrs Karim, Mrs Middlebrook, Mrs Boulos, Mrs Andry, Mr Liu, Mr Parker and our helpful casual teachers.

**Mrs Jessica Mann**  
**CAPA Coordinator**

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## From the Assyrian Department

As we are coming to the end of the year, it is time to reflect on students' learning in Assyrian during Term 4.

In Term 4, Year 7 student learned about how to initiate friendship with others, focusing on aspects of a 'true friend'. Students gained this knowledge through learning about the characteristics and role of a true friend in their life. Furthermore, students learned how to be true friends to other.

The learning happened through various activities such as the speaking or writing where students described how a true friend looks like, what is expected from a true friends and how they have positive impact in students' life.

This above unit of work gave students an opportunity to learn more about ourselves and how they need to communicate with other classmates and friends. For example, they learned that by being respectful, trustworthy, kind, helpful and honest, a student actually practise being a true friend. This learning stems from the Christian values that we teach in our College, and how the church expects us to behave as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

For Year 8, student learned about the importance of sport activities in their life. This unit taught students about the relation between healthy food that they have studied in previous terms and the importance of staying fit and healthy through various physical exercises that they practice at home and at school. Furthermore, students learned that sport is about competing with other peers in different types of sport aiming for teamwork.

This topic has encouraged students to improve their vocabulary skills which ultimately improve their reading and comprehension skills. On the other hand, the topic helped student to link theory with practice and how to use different strategies for different types of sport to achieve their goals.

Year 8 were grateful for the opportunity to practice their language within knowledge real world contexts.

Year 9 studied the topic of 'Memories', where they learned how to create diary entries, and how to read different types of texts of different memories like travelling to different places around the world.

At the start of Term 4, students learned now key vocabulary. This was important to move forward and learn about other contexts too. Later in the term students learned how to analyse a text about individual memories, also how to write down their memories. They realised that writing diary entries is a way to keep them in a safe place to keep them and share them sometimes with family members or close friends.

At the end of the term, students learned about overseas trips, they read about trips that the Assyrian Youth Group had to Europe and homeland (Mesopotamia). The text about the trip to Mesopotamia enlightened students minds about the way of living of those Assyrians who are still living in our country of origin.



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Term 4 was the last term for year 10 students to study Assyrian. Many students reflected that their journey of studying Assyrian whether from K – 10 or from years 7-10, was a positive and important aspect of their schooling education as it allowed them to realize the importance of learning their language. Year 10 students, started understanding how their language can practically connect to a variety of aspects in their life within different community aspects, such as, family, food, sport, church, culture and celebrations.

Furthermore, the learning of Assyrian language throughout the years has encouraged student to incorporate the language within their daily lives with mixed abilities, to preserve their language, culture and identity and be good elements as community members and within the Australian multicultural society.

As the school year is coming to end, we farewell another cohort of students who have been learning their mother tongue for the last few years. I am confident that we will reap the benefits of such learning within the coming years. May God bless them and lead their way during their future life.



**Yacoub Oraham**

**Assyrian Language Coordinator**





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## From the LSU Department

Dear friends and family of the Saint Narsai Assyrian Christian College community,

We in the Learning Support Unit (LSU) pray that everyone is safe and well. We would like to provide you with information regarding the Disability Standards for Education 2005 under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. This information comes directly from the Australian Government's Federal Register of Legislation website, and supports your child's right to equitable educational opportunities. Below are the main parts for your perusal.

### Introduction

These Standards are formulated by the Commonwealth Attorney-General under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (the Act).

The Act seeks to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against people with disabilities. Under section 22 of the Act, it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability or a disability of any associates of that person. Section 31 of the Act enables the Attorney-General to formulate disability standards in relation to a range of areas, including the education of persons with a disability.

Under section 32 of the Act, it is unlawful for a person to contravene a disability standard. A complaint about an alleged contravention can be made to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Section 34 of the Act provides that, if a person acts in accordance with a disability standard, Part 2 of the Act does not apply to the person's action or, in other words, the person's action complies with the Act and is not made unlawful by it.

How the standards operate

The standards set out in Parts 4 to 8 of the Standards specify how education and training are to be made accessible to students with disabilities. They cover the following areas:

- enrolment;
- participation;
- curriculum development, accreditation and delivery;
- student support services; and
- elimination of harassment and victimisation.

### Part 1 Preliminary

#### 1.1 Name of Standards

These Standards are the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

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## 1.2 Commencement

These Standards take effect on the day on which the requirements of subsection 31 (3) or (4) of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 are first complied with.

## 1.3 Objects

The objects of these Standards are:

- (a) to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the area of education and training; and
- (b) to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law in the area of education and training as the rest of the community; and
- (c) to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

## Part 2 Meaning of important terms

### 2.1 Education providers

For these Standards, an **education provider** is:

- (a) an educational authority; or
- (b) an educational institution; or
- (c) an organisation whose purpose is to develop or accredit curricula or training courses used by other education providers.

### 2.2 Meaning of on the same basis

- (1) A person with a disability is able to seek admission to, or apply for enrolment in, an institution **on the same basis** as a prospective student without a disability if the person has opportunities and choices in admission or enrolment that are comparable with those offered to other prospective students without disabilities.
- (2) An education provider treats a prospective student with a disability **on the same basis** as a prospective student without a disability if the provider makes any decisions about admission or enrolment on the basis that reasonable adjustments will be provided in accordance with section 5.2.
- (3) A person with a disability is able to participate in courses or programs provided by an educational institution, and use the facilities and services provided by it, **on the same basis** as a student without a

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disability if the person has opportunities and choices in the courses or programs and in the use of the facilities and services that are comparable with those offered to other students without disabilities.

## Part 3 Making reasonable adjustments

### 3.1 Adjustments

For these Standards, each of the following is an **adjustment**:

- (a) a measure or action (or a group of measures or actions) taken by an education provider that has the effect of assisting a student with a disability:
  - (i) in relation to an admission or enrolment – to apply for the admission or enrolment; and
  - (ii) in relation to a course or program – to participate in the course or program; and
  - (iii) in relation to facilities or services – to use the facilities or services;

on the same basis as a student without a disability, and includes an aid, a facility, or a service that the student requires because of his or her disability;

- (b) an adjustment mentioned in subsection 7.2 (4);
- (c) if a change is made to an adjustment mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) – the adjustment as affected by the change.

### 3.2 Reasonable adjustments

- (1) For these Standards, an adjustment is **reasonable** in relation to a student with a disability if it balances the interests of all parties affected.

Note Judgements about what is reasonable for a particular student, or a group of students, with a particular disability may change over time.

- (2) In assessing whether a particular adjustment for a student is reasonable, regard should be had to all the relevant circumstances and interests, including the following:

- (a) the student's disability;
- (b) the views of the student or the student's associate, given under section 3.5;
- (c) the effect of the adjustment on the student, including the effect on the student's:
  - (i) ability to achieve learning outcomes; and
  - (ii) ability to participate in courses or programs; and
  - (iii) independence;

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- (d) the effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected, including the education provider, staff and other students;
- (e) the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

I hope this information is useful to you. However, if you require further clarification, please feel free to contact the Learning Support Faculty and ask for Miss Ninva Yakou.

In the countdown until Christmas, and as the Learning Support Co-ordinator, I would personally like to thank Mrs Abeer Haddad, Mrs Ishtar Yousef, Mrs Nora Dawod, Mrs Anna Andry, Mrs Lina Francis, Mrs Fayruz Sebo, Mrs Dalia Matti, Mrs Tamara Telo and our school counsellor, Mrs Berta Rasho, for their hard work, dedication and commitment to our students. They have shown unparalleled patience, care and compassion for each learner.

We pray that you and your families have a joyous, safe and blessed Christmas and new year. We look forward to a successful and progressive year in 2024 with our learners.

Merry Christmas, happy new year, and God bless you and your families.

**Warm regards,**

**Miss Ninva Yakou**