GRADE STRUCTURE 2020: FURTHER DETAILS
Since I provided details on our grade structure for next year in last weeks newsletter, several parents have contacted me expressing concerns over having composite grade 5/6s next year. Workforce planning, of which developing our grade structure and the provision of specialist programs are an integral part, is a very complex and multi-faceted role for principals. Having replied to each parent individually, on reflection, I feel it could be of interest to parents more broadly, as to the intricacies involved, when I make decisions regarding the grade structure of our school annually. In doing so I will draw in a general sense on the concerns that have been raised with me this past week and the explanations I have given. By way of introduction, let me outline the scenario and options available to me on this matter.

Firstly, I am restricted to having no more than a total of 25 grades (which we currently have) because our total enrolment numbers are between 600 and 650 students. The DET does not provide single portable classrooms any more, and as such, enrolment increases must justify the provision of double classroom portables.

Secondly, given this non-negotiable scenario, I have 3 options available to me with regard to the management of our student enrolment numbers and the consequent implications for our grade structure for next year.

Continued...
Option 1:

“That which I have chosen” - that being, having an additional (20-22) Prep students with 5 Prep grades and composite grade 5/6s, reducing the number of grades in our senior area by one to accommodate the additional Prep grade. The financial implication of my decision is that in total having an additional Prep grade next year, with the increase of 20-22 students, means we will have an extra $180,000 to $200,000 available in our budget.

Option 2:

Enrol 100 Prep children for next year, but choose to have composite grade 3/4s and reduce the total number of grade 3s and 4s by one. In doing so we would be able to have 3 straight grade 5s and 6s each. In this scenario, our budget funds available to us would still provide us with the additional $180,000 to $200,000. However, with (104) grade 3 students plus (94) grade 4 students, totalling (198), and having one less grade across which they would have been spread, would mean that we would have 6 composite grade 3/4s with (33) students per grade. Simultaneously, with (80) students in Year 5 and (78) students in Year 6, dividing them into 3 straight grades for each year level would result in grade 5s of (26/27) students and grade 6s of (26) students. The disparity in numbers between the composite grade 3/4s of (33) and the straight grade 6s of (26) I find unacceptable, all the more so given Option 1, in which our grade 4s and grade 5/6 composite grades would have comparable numbers. By and large, the older children become, the more independent in their learning they become and as such, the larger class sizes are in the senior grades.

Option 3:

Limit our Prep enrolment to about (80) students for next year, effectively meaning a reduction of 20 students, with the consequent reduction in funds available to our school of between $180,000 and $200,000 as explained above, and have 3 straight grade 5s and 6s of (26/27) and (26) students respectively. As also explained later, there’s no way we would be able to raise an additional amount of revenue anywhere near $180,000 to $200,000 and that’s a lot of money to forego to have straight grade 6s.

In summary, the concerns and suggestions brought to my attention by some parents are as follows:

(1) The teaching/learning program for the students in the composite grade 5/6s could be compromised.

(2) Year 6 is a 'special' year for those students and being in composite grades could diminish this.

(3) The grade 5/6 composites are large and with a number of children with special needs in this area next year, this could place the teachers under too much pressure with a consequent negative impact on the learning/wellbeing outcomes for students and the wellbeing of staff.

(4) Communication with parents on this issue could have been made earlier and in doing so, a school community/forum for discussion could have been held.

(5) If the decision was based on budget/financial grounds then a fundraising/grant seeking approach could have been considered as an alternative.

Continued...
Insofar as (1) is concerned, I do not believe that this will occur. Firstly, the team of teachers who will be in the senior area next year will be drawn entirely from this year’s team. They are an excellent team who know their children well and have considerable experience in this area of the school. For the record, over the 30 years of our school’s existence we have had composite grades across all grade areas from time to time, all depending on the circumstances at hand. Composite grades of themselves, are not detrimental to a child’s education. Poor teaching would be, but not the grade structure of a school. Personally, I am neither for nor against composite grades. In my class teaching years, I taught as many composite grades as straight grades, and that coupled with my many years in the teaching profession, I hold the view that the most important influence on the quality of teaching for all students is their teacher. With that in mind, I have no doubt that the students in next year’s composite grade 5/6s will in no way be educationally disadvantaged. I have asked Sandra McCrum, our curriculum co-ordinator, to also respond in this week’s newsletter, with respect to our teaching and learning program and how we cater to the individual needs of all children. Suffice then for me to say here, it is fundamental to our approach in Victoria, to focus on the provision of a differentiated teaching and learning program for all students. This aligns well with composite and straight grades.

For (2) my response is that all year levels are equally ‘special’ and in different ways. We most certainly acknowledge this for our Year 6 students - they occupy all senior school leadership positions, are our senior student role models and ambassadors, attend leadership programs throughout the year and are honoured with an excellent graduation program.

Insofar as (3) is concerned, yes our composite grade 5/6s will be slightly larger than those we most often have over the years, those averaging about 28/30. This year they have been smaller, but that is the result of occasional enrolment circumstances, not the norm, and the fact that we have not had the option of having an additional Prep grade as we will have next year. Secondly, we will have a number of special needs students in the grade 5/6 area next year, but we will also have significant funds available to us to provide additional support, and we will. The fact that we will have 5 grades to which we can allocate all these students with special needs, with most being in the Year 5 level, is a positive for both staff and students.

With regard to a perceived lack of communication with parents (4) regarding the grade structure change for grades 5 and 6 next year, I am at a loss. In terms of being able to inform parents earlier than I did is concerned, to a large extent that was not possible because having composite grade 5/6s next year is dependant on having 5 grade Preps and it is only recently that we achieved sufficient numbers of Preps for that to happen. With respect to the suggestion that I could conduct a school community forum/discussion meeting on this issue, I take this opportunity to explain my approach to making decisions regarding the grade structure for our school annually. This area of my work is best described as belonging to "school operations", as such the direct responsibility of the school principal, and therefore not that of school council and by extension parents. Workforce planning, which includes staffing, the allocation of responsibilities and determining the grade structure and specialist programs profile of the school is a core operational duty of the school principal. Many factors impact on decisions that the principal makes regarding workforce planning for their school. In last week’s newsletter, I outlined many of the factors that must be considered when making decisions regarding workforce planning. It is indeed a complex field, with a number of competing interests, features and at times, viewpoints. For example, some parents prefer not to have composite grade 5/6s. Other parents don’t like job-sharing grades, whilst other still have negative views about open-plan classrooms. Indeed, some parents prefer their child to have an experienced teacher; others prefer less-experienced teachers, whom they perceive to bring an enthusiasm to the classroom that they welcome. My point is that it wouldn’t matter what direction I took with regard to operational decisions, the likelihood of some people being unhappy with it is high. I do, as matter of operational policy, consult widely with my staff via our consultative committee and my staff leadership team, not to mention the whole of staff. I can assure you that I have their strong support in this decision regarding having composite grade 5/6s for next year. Insofar as conducting an open parent forum or discussion on our school’s grade structure is concerned, I have never in my 34 years as a school principal done so, know of no other principals who do so, and won’t be holding one this year as I do not see any need to do so.

Continued...
I hope that this detailed explanation, coupled with last week’s information clarifies the issue. Again, I thank those parents who took the time to inform me of their concerns and provide suggestions. I always welcome feedback for without it, I may be in the dark on matters of significant importance to you, our parents and, by extension miss the chance to listen.

**TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 2020**

Firstly, I am pleased to report that earlier this week we completed the selection process for our final teaching position vacancy, appointing Emma Riseley. Emma has been employed as a Casual Relief Teacher (CRT) at our school during 2018-19, and has taught across all grades whilst here. Emma will be teaching a grade 3 class next year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Structure</th>
<th>Grade Name</th>
<th>Teacher/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Prep B</td>
<td>Rylie Bolton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Prep C</td>
<td>Carla Conway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Prep G</td>
<td>Rachel Garnish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Prep O</td>
<td>Olivia Cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Prep T</td>
<td>Tanya Craig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade 1/2
- 1M Min Mao
- 1A Lauren Allison
- 1LW Trish Luke (0.8) and Lia Whitelaw (0.2)
- 1MW Lorraine Montgomery (0.8) and Kerry Worthington (0.2)
- 2AR Alvina Seow (0.6) and Rose Scavo (0.4)
- 2C Zena Cadman
- 2K Bernadette Kelly
- 2S Vanessa Stevens

Grade 3/4
- 3F Fiona Froelich
- 3M Lianne Morgan
- 3N Sue Naismith
- 3R Emma Riseley
- 4B Julie Barry
- 4Q Jacqui Quelch
- 4T Michele Tan

Grade 5/6
- 5/6C Sharon Chandler
- 5/6K Sharyn King
- 5/6M Ali McArthur
- 5/6P Nick Pryor
- 5/6W Lia Whitelaw (0.6) and Kerry Worthington (0.4)

*Continued...*
PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

SCHOOL EMERGENCY DRILL NEXT WEEK

We will be conducting another school emergency drill sometime next week. The children are becoming increasingly familiarised with the procedure and perhaps a discussion at home with your child, particularly those in grade Prep would help allay any fears and anxiety they may have.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ’s)

Q. What happens if I forget to forward a parent request (should I have strong reasons for doing so) to the principal before the cut-off date which is next Monday 18 November?

A. Hmmm! The later you leave it, the less likely that I can accommodate your request. Teachers invest considerable time in the process of grade placement decisions and late requests are not welcomed very much at all.

QUOTABLE QUOTE

‘If you can’t please the majority of people more often than not, maybe it would be wise to consider pleasing the person with the most influence, most of the time’

Henry Grossek

Specialists

Visual Arts          Jo Zammit (0.8) and Kylee Muccignat (0.2)
Performing Arts    Christine Thomas
Physical Education  Nikki Perfect
Mandarin            Wen Tian
Multimedia/Robotics (Gr 3-6)  Rob Kelly
Additional Assistance Rose Scavo (0.2)
LT & LS T/Rel       Kylee Muccignat (0.4)
HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER?

Please ensure you let the school office know if you have changed address or updated mobile phones with new numbers. This information alleviates stressful situations for students when they are ill and we cannot contact parents.
**AFTERNOON DELIGHT – FRIDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 3.45pm – 5.30pm (Approximately)**

Next Friday the 22nd November we will be holding our ‘Afternoon Delight’. This is a selection of songs and performances from our choir, State School Spectacular choir and other students. The afternoon is not a Twilight Christmas performance. During our last Monday morning assembly for the year which is held on Monday 16th December, we will have Christmas performances from each area. Next Friday, we look forward to a relaxed afternoon of music and performances. Please bring an afternoon tea picnic to share with your family.

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child’s education. Students learn new things at school every day. Students who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing fundamental aspects of their educational and social development. The Victorian Governments “Everyday Counts” initiative promotes the fact that regular school attendance enables students to maximise their full potential and to actively participate and engage in their learning. It is important that children develop habits or regular attendance at an early age. Children with attendance of 80 per cent or less (that is, 40 days or more absenteeism per year) may be significantly disadvantaged in their learning. If you are having attendance issues with your child, please let your child’s teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day. Our Assistant Principal or school staff will contact you if there are any concerns about your child’s attendance or punctuality. Remember EVERYDAY COUNTS!

**FUTURES IN MIND**

Futures in Mind is a private pediatric allied health practice established in 2015 by Child and Adolescent Psychologist Ms Felicity Ferber. Individual counselling sessions are available to children at school, with a referral and Mental Health Care Plan (obtainable from GP). These sessions are bulk-billed through Medicare and there is no cost to the family. Each student is eligible for up to 10 sessions per calendar year. Counselling can be provided for, but not limited to, the following concerns: • Anxiety • Depression • Self-esteem • Social skills • Emotion coaching / Anger Management • Grief and Loss • Family separation

For more information, please speak to your child’s teacher or Angela Maskery

**2020 PREP TRANSITION PROGRAM**

The 2020 Prep students came to visit Berwick Lodge this week to participate in a story time session in the library with Mr Carthew. The children were thoroughly engaged as they listened to a selection of Mr Carthew’s wonderful stories including “The Moose is Loose” and sang along with some songs, as he played the guitar. The formal 2020 Prep Transition program will commence on Tuesday next week when the kinder children will spend time within a Prep classroom. We are very much looking forward to welcoming the new children and their families to our school!

**RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

**Myth:** Respectful relationships education will mean less time for literacy and numeracy

**Fact:** The Victorian Government is committed to improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for our students, which is why we have recently launched our Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. It provides greater investment and support for teachers through teaching resources and professional development opportunities.
Myth:
Respectful relationships education does not address violence against men

Fact:
Respectful relationships education is about building positive relationships for all young people. Students are given the opportunity to explore emotions such as anger and frustration, and develop non-violent problem solving strategies. All secondary school students learn about and explore the relationship between gender and power and the way gender stereotypes and behaviours can lead to unhealthy relationships or coping strategies. Primary school students are supported to learn new skills to build their confidence and resilience.

TEACHING AND LEARNING PROGRAM FROM PREP TO GRADE 6
Teachers follow the Victorian Curriculum when planning for their classes. Teaching teams work closely together to plan all areas of the curriculum and they develop a comprehensive educational program which progresses all students from Prep to Grade 6. Each area of our school has a curriculum coordinator who works closely with their team and also, Sandra McCrum, our Curriculum leader for the school. Within our teaching and learning programs, the teachers plan a differentiated curriculum catering for all student's needs, rates of learning and abilities. Within any one classroom, there will be students who are achieving below, at and above the expected level and this occurs whether they are in a ‘straight’ or ‘composite’ classroom.

Teachers plan a diverse range of learning opportunities which engage the students and allows them to learn in their own way and at a pace which suits the learner. Currently we have ‘straight’ grades from Prep to grade 6 with each teacher planning the appropriate curriculum. A composite class does not mean we change the approach to planning appropriate, challenging and engaging curriculum for all our students. Students need regular revision of content to assist with consolidating and mastering learnt skills as they progress on the continuum. This occurs within all classrooms, regardless of being a ‘straight’ or ‘composite’ grade level. All students have individual learning goals which outline what the student is working towards and parents are able to assist with this at home. The teachers work closely with the students to develop individual learning goals which will both challenge and consolidate their learning. Our whole school is very professional in our approach to teaching and learning, from supporting students who may be struggling through to extending students where needed, and this will continue in the future.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE
On Monday we held our Remembrance Day service for the whole school. The service was led by our wonderful school captains, Lachlan, Ava and Ally. They spoke about Remembrance Day and why it is significant to pause and remember those who have served or are currently serving. It was lovely to see many parents attend the service.

Sandra McCrum and Angela Maskery
The end of 2019 is quickly approaching, so to ensure that you receive your reward back before school finishes, our **LAST DAY** for student banking will be **Tuesday 3RD DECEMBER 2019**. If your child is in grade 6 and have gold tokens, please remember these cannot be transferred to siblings so make sure you order all rewards by the 3rd December 2019.

The 2019 Polar Saver rewards are still available EXCEPT the Yeti Fluffy Notebook as this has sold out.

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**BOOK CLUB ORDERS**

Book club orders CLOSE on Monday 2nd December at 3pm. Please place all orders **ONLINE** by this date in order to receive them before school finishes.

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**LIBRARY NEWS**

The last day for borrowing books from the Library is Friday 6th December. **ALL BOOKS** must be returned by no later than Friday 13th December in order to complete our stocktake.
BUSINESS ADVERTISING

payk

Get $50 on us for your class gift.

Class Gifting Made Simple

1. Create Group and invite parents
2. Collect Funds securely by card
3. Withdraw for free to your bank

PAYK50

To redeem this offer, start a collection with the class parents, open the group settings at the top right, and enter the code above.

10 members required to redeem. Terms & conditions apply. See payk.com.au for details.

BELEZA
HALLAM
7/151-159 Princes Hwy
P: (03) 9702 3181

VIP SALE
20% OFF*

Wednesday 13 Nov - Saturday 16 Nov 2019

TRADING HOURS:
MONDAY – FRIDAY: 9AM – 5PM
SATURDAY: 9AM – 1PM
SUNDAY: CLOSED

*VIP SALE CONDITIONS:
Discount applies ONLY to Beleza brand full retail priced items.
Shoes & Discounted items excluded. Some other exclusions apply.
Hosting an exchange student can be a truly rewarding experience for the whole family

Welcome a new family member into your home

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED IN 2020

✓ Experience a foreign culture firsthand
✓ Be exposed to a new language at home
✓ Rediscover and share the beauty of Australia
✓ Develop friendships that last a lifetime

Students arrive in January, May, July and August and stay for 3, 5 or 10 months. All students have a wide range of interests and hobbies.

If your family can offer a friendly, supportive and caring home environment, contact us today 1300 135 331 or info@studentexchange.org.au

www.studentexchange.org.au/hosting

experienceiseverything

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WELFARE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Empasense Counselling is run by Cassie Eckard. Cassie holds a Master in Counselling (Monash University), she is fully insured and is registered with the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia. Cassie specialises in counselling children, teenagers and teachers. She originally trained as a teacher and taught in secondary schools for a few years before going back to university to study counselling. She has since undertaken further training in sand-play therapy, as well as art and play therapy for children.

Cassie has worked in a range of therapeutic settings and is currently employed as a student counsellor at a P-12 school in the Yarra Valley. As a qualified teacher, Cassie has a unique understanding of the pressures faced by schools, and enjoys helping teachers and students alike. She currently consults out of Pascoe Vale and Lilydale and offers in-school visits throughout the Cardinia, Casey and Yarra Ranges areas.

SERVICES

Counselling for children aged 5-18
- Individual sessions
- Tailored group sessions for targeted groups of children. E.g. resilience building, grief and loss, social skills etc.
- NDIS sessions for clients who self-manage.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
- This is confidential, short term counselling provided to teachers and other staff members. This is funded by employers as part of improving staff wellbeing.
- Such services are of vital importance for teachers, who often suffer from stress, burnout, work-life imbalance and vicarious trauma from emotionally supporting their students.

Teacher debriefing and counselling (privately funded)
- Teachers can also access services privately for debriefing and general counseling.

Contact Cassie to arrange a meet and greet with your School Welfare Team today or visit the website for more information:

w: www.empasense.com.au
e: empasense@gmail.com
m: 0448 368 750
Green Living Festival 2019

Saturday 16 November, 10.00 am – 3.00 pm
Bunjil Place, 2 Patrick Northeast Drive, Narre Warren

» UP CLOSE WILDLIFE EXPERIENCES with Reptile Encounters
» Make your own PEDAL POWERED SMOOTHIES
» MARKET STALLS offering green products and services
» Green living TALKS AND DEMOS
» FREE CHILDREN’S ENTERTAINMENT
» Do your CHRISTMAS SHOPPING early!

BYO reusable cup, water bottle and cash (no ATM onsite)

Stay up to date by joining the ‘Green Living in Casey’ Facebook group.

Search ‘Green Living’ on the City of Casey website or call 9705 5200 for more information.
WE’RE IN TOWN
Roll up your sleeves and give blood

Narre Warren North
Mobile Donor Centre
Community Hall - 1-11 A’Beckett Road, Narre Warren North 3805

Appointments available:
Monday 11 November  12.30 pm – 7.00 pm
Tuesday 12 November  12.00 pm – 7.00 pm
Wednesday 13 November  12.00 pm – 7.00 pm
Thursday 14 November  1.00 pm – 7.00 pm
Friday 15 November  8.00 am – 3.00 pm

Make an appointment today

Call 13 14 95 or visit donateblood.com.au
COMMUNITY ADVERTISING

Summer Holiday Club

Celebrate the biggest break of the year, with Holiday Club. Holiday Club is all about helping your children discover themselves. With a wealth of learning opportunities embedded in our fun and challenging projects, and engaging adventures; we’ll find their passions, engage them, and excite them.

With years of experience and building off family feedback, we’re happy to present to you, our Summer Holiday Club. It’s packed with cooking days, science experiments, sporting events, adventurous excursions and heaps more.

Children discover themselves at Holiday Club

We are all looking forward to the holiday program here at Berwick Lodge. We have some exciting things planned for the kids such as water play, dance parties, exciting team games with challenges, a cinema visit, action at the indoor sports centre, some exciting cooking recipes and ten pin bowling. And aye my hearties, we are even a pirate Day which will involve dress ups, treasure maps and scavenger hunts.

Book now. To find out when these activities are on during the school holidays and to find your nearest service, visit: www.campaustralia.com.au/holidayclubs.
We look forward to seeing you at Holiday Club.
The Camp Australia Team

Access any one of our 230+ Holiday Club locations Australia-wide. Near home, work or even your holiday destination!

Want more excursions? Maybe more club days? Pick any program near you, they’re all unique.

Avoid a late booking charge and save $10 by booking at least 7 days in advance. Plus, with limited space, spots fill up.

To find locations near you and to book, visit www.campaustralia.com.au/holidayclubs
Hello parents

We are excited at OSHC for the recycling week coming up in November 11th - 15th and have some great activities lined up including our design a 'Recycling week' poster competition, decorate a banner, cooking delicious recipes and making some fantastic items from recyclable material. The team have put time into selecting these activities and we are gearing up for a fun time and also one of learning how we can help practically to look after our earth! To this end we are going to need recyclable items including bottle tops, boxes, cardboard, cans, etc. Please see our educators about what items we can use for the week, we would greatly appreciate your contribution!

Kind regards
Sandra Stegmann and
Berwick Lodge OSHC team
Camp Australia

National Recycling Week, 11th - 15th November.

Over the past few years, the need for awareness of sustainable living practices has increased significantly around the world – and recycling has become more crucial than ever with our fast-growing population. In fact, a nationwide review revealed that waste has increased around 170% since 1996, which is why becoming more environmentally responsible has never been more urgent.

This term, we will be bringing recycling to the forefront in Outside School Hours Care by celebrating National Recycling Week from 11th to 15th November. It is going to be a fun-filled week as we teach children all about sustainability and how they can contribute to the world for future generations!

Our aim is to develop their knowledge and creativity on recycling through fun-learning activities. Some of these include using used bottles or cartons for planting, making newspaper hats, an exciting recycled fashion parade, and hoops more! Talk to the Educators at your service to find out what they have lined up for National Recycling Week.

Not yet Registered? Don’t worry, it’s never too late. Plus, it’s FREE to register.

Before attending our care, you must register your child on camp.australia.com.au/account/login. Also remember, you may be entitled to receive the Australian Government Child Care Subsidy, visit www.myGov.com.au to find out more.

More Program Details

For more information about your program and fees, visit your service and have a chat with one of our qualified Educators. Alternatively, you may visit our website at www.campaustralia.com.au or contact our friendly Customer Care Team on 1300 105 343 who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – except National Public Holidays.

We look forward to seeing you and your family soon!

Camp Australia

Safety • Meaningful • Innovative • Leadership • Education
we make kids smile
COMMUNITY ADVERTISING

NARRE WARREN CALISTHENICS CLUB

Come and Try Classes

Fun, Fitness, Singing, Dancing, Gymnastics, Confidence, Coordination, Team oriented

Monday 18th November 2019
3-7yrs 4.30pm - 5.30pm
8-10yrs 5.30pm - 6.30pm
11-13yrs 6.30pm - 8.00pm
26yrs+ 8.00pm - 9.30pm

Tuesday 19th November 2019
14-17yrs 5.30pm - 7.00pm
18yrs+ 7.00 - 8.30pm

Fleetwood Primary School
Fleetwood Drive
Narre Warren, Vic 3805
Ph: Marilyn (03) 9795 1298
enquiries@narrewarrencalisthenicsclub.com

Instagram

We'd love to see you there!!