Term 4 Week 9 Thursday 5 December 2013

PRINCIPAL’S PAGE

**Carols by Candlelight - Important Information**
The Carols by Candlelight will be held next Monday, 9th December, at 6:00pm. Gates will open at 5.30pm. For security, families are asked to only enter via the school's main gate in front of the Admin Building or the gate near the MCP and tennis courts. These will be the only entry points for the night. The Carols will be held on the school's oval and entry will cost just $2 per person or $5 for a family. Programs with raffle tickets will be provided upon payment at the gate and extra raffle tickets can be purchased at the event ($1.00 per raffle ticket, three for $2.00 or ten for $5.00). We have some amazing prizes available so far this year including a Goldsteins voucher, VIP passes for Movieworld, Seaworld and Wet 'n' Wild, laser skirmish passes and of course the hampers which you have all generously donated to.

In addition to these amazing raffle prizes you can look forward to fireworks, a sausage sizzle and of course some beautiful performances. This year we also have LED candles on sale to help us ignite the Christmas Spirit. Glow candles will be on sale for $3.00 each or two for $5.00. Glow bangles will be on sale for 50 cents each. We would like to see all our Merrimac families attending the Carols as it should be a spectacular night. Hopefully everyone will stay until the end of the evening to enjoy the fantastic fireworks display.

**Staffing News**
Mr Jenks has been acting Deputy Principal at Broadbeach State School for all of this year. Broadbeach SS is now eligible for a second Deputy Principal position from the start of the new school year. Mr Jenks has decided to continue at Broadbeach as a permanent Deputy Principal and has been officially relocated from our school to Broadbeach SS. Mr Jenks has settled in very well at Broadbeach and the school community is very happy that he is staying. It is sad for Merrimac as Mr Jenks had been part of our school for many years and has contributed to the growth of the school and its facilities. We wish Mr Jenks all the very best.

Miss Murray will continue through until June next year as our upper school acting Deputy Principal and Mrs McNeilage will continue as our acting Head of Curriculum. The back fill of the Teacher Librarian position (literacy and ICT role) is still being finalised.

Mrs Taffs has Long Service Leave for the last week of term and Miss Danijela Rigby will be replacing her for Week 10.

**Baby News**
Congratulations to Ms Parker who had a lovely baby boy this week - Taj Joel Parker. Both mum and baby are doing fine. Mrs Helen Parker is now a very proud grandmother.

**Enrolment Management Plan**
Our school’s official Enrolment Management Plan (EMP) has been gazetted and is now in place. Our school has an identified enrolment boundary and catchment area. Our official enrolment capacity is 854 students and we should endeavour not to go above this total. In addition, our Prep enrolment for next year is not allowed to exceed 113 students. All students currently enrolled as well as siblings and staff members’ children are all fine to continue at Merrimac even if they reside outside our boundary. All future enrolments who submitted their enrolment forms before the EMP was finalised and signed off (18 November 2013) are able to be enrolled at Merrimac even if residing outside our catchment area. Now that the EMP has come into force, we have to monitor our enrolments. All future enrolments who live within our boundary are fine to attend and cannot be refused enrolment. All new enrolments will need to show proof of residing within our catchment area. However, those residing outside our catchment area may have to go on a waiting list or be refused enrolment if there are no vacancies in the various year levels within our school.

**Volunteers’ Afternoon Tea**
Our volunteers’ afternoon tea held yesterday in the Science Centre was a big success. Thank you to all the many volunteers who came along and were presented with their certificates of appreciation by Mr Bob La Castra, our Divisional Gold Coast City Councillor. All present enjoyed the afternoon tea which was provided by the P&C. Thanks to Denise McKay from the tuckshop and her helpers.

At Merrimac we have very good support by parents and grandparents. This is very much appreciated. We thank all our many helpers who assist in our classrooms, tuckshop, bookshop, discos, assisting sporting teams, bookclub, school student banking, P&C and various committees. We look forward to your support again in 2014. Mr LaCastra was presented with a thank you plaque from the P&C for his ongoing support of our school and all the support he gave our school with the new car park this year.

**Platinum Cards/Merit Certificates**
Our Platinum Cards and Merit Certificates will be sent home next week. Overall the standard of behaviour this term has been good with a pleasing number of our children receiving Merit Certificates (5 or less points with no L4 or L5). Platinum Cards are awarded to students with exemplary behaviour (no more than 1 point). Parents are encouraged to continue to support Merrimac’s Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students.

**End of Year Reporting**
Report Cards for all year levels have gone home this week. Parent/Teacher interviews, if needed, can be arranged in the last week of term.

**Party Day**
The majority of classes will be holding their end of year Class Parties next Wednesday 11 December.

**Free Dress Day**
Next Wednesday 11 December will be a Free Dress Day. Students will be able to wear free dress in exchange for a gold coin. Money collected will go to the helping with the Philippines disaster recovery.

The Student Council children will collect the money on the day from the classrooms. Please ensure free dress clothing is sensible and sun safe.

**HRE Parent Feedback**
The school’s HRE program for Years 5, 6 and 7 was implemented in Weeks 7 and 8 of this term. For the first time our school utilised the services of Family Planning Queensland to present the HRE...
lessons to our classes. The total cost of the program was about $4200 to deliver and this cost was shared between the school and the P&C Association. For next year this cost may have to be also shared with families contributing partially to the program cost. Parent feedback on the usefulness of this program and thoughts on the future of the program would be appreciated. Both the school and P&C need to determine the future direction of our school’s HRE program. Please send any comments or suggestions through the school’s office or through the next P&C meeting.

**Student Council Thanks**

This year’s Student Council has raised funds throughout the year with their Discos and Free Dress Days. The Student Council have supported quite a number of worthwhile charities. Also the School Council has help some school Chaplaincy projects. A big thank you to Miss Parkes and all the Student Council children for their great work throughout the year.

**School Uniform Donation**

Parents whose children finish at Merrimac at the end of the school year may like to donate their children’s uniforms to our school reserve supply. This would greatly help our spare clothing pool for when children are in need of borrowing a spare uniform. Parents, please check your uniforms at home as we are missing a few uniforms from our supply. They are numbered on the tag. Also, the Music Committee would be very appreciative of donations of black shoes.

**Year 7 Graduation Information**

Parents are advised that the graduation tickets will be given to the students next Monday 9 December. Please check with your child on Monday afternoon. Students are expected to wear their Graduation shirts for the ceremony and to wear plain coloured shoes (preferably black, white or grey), no bright colours please. Remember to bring your tickets with you next Thursday for allocated seating. The Graduation Ceremony will commence promptly at 10.00am, seating from 9.50am. The Ceremony is expected to finish at approximately 12.00 after which light food will be served to guests. Parents may leave at their own leisure. The event will be finished by 1.30pm. A Year 7 student disco will be held the same evening from 6.30pm – 8.00pm in the MPC. On the last day of term our Year 7 students will enjoy a special day at Wet n Wild.

**Student Placements 2014**

If your child will not be returning to Merrimac in 2014 please fill out the slip below and return it to the school office tomorrow. This will assist in the placements for next year. Please note this does not apply to Year 7 students in 2013.

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**STUDENT NON PLACEMENT FOR 2014**

My child/children **will not** be attending Merrimac Primary next year.

The new school is: 

Parent/Guardian Signature: 

Student/s Name: 

Class: 

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**Student Leader Process**

The selection process for all the Student Leaders is now complete. All student leader positions will be published in next week’s newsletter.

**Student Success**

Congratulations to Ella Moore who was presented with her ICAS Medallion at a special ceremony in Brisbane last Saturday. Ella was awarded her medallion for achieving the highest score possible in the Year 4 Australian English Competition. This is a fantastic effort. Well done Ella.

**Lost Property**

The lost property box in the undercover area is quite full with jumpers, hats, lunch boxes, etc. Parents are asked to check the lost property before the end of term. Each class will go through the items during the last week of school. Any unclaimed, unnamed property will be sent to charities over the holidays. Parents are also asked to check the lost property at the After School Care.

**Philippines Collection Thank You**

A BIG thank you once again to everyone who donated to the Philippines Appeal over the last few weeks. We were able to put it all together into 18 boxes. I am sure they will appreciate all items donated.

Our school would like to thank Melissa Strudwick, one of our Teacher Aides, who was the driving force behind our school’s fund raising efforts for the Philippines’s disaster.

**SPORTING NEWS**

**South Coast Sport Officials for 2014**

Congratulations to Mr Singh who has been successfully appointed as a South Coast Official for 2014. He has been appointed as the Under 12 Rugby League Regional Manager. South Coast Sport provides TRS for teacher release for days involved in this sport. Well done Mr Singh.

**Tennis Gala Day**

On Monday all our classes had the opportunity to participate in the Tennis gala day. All students certainly enjoyed the day. Thanks to Mr Singh for organising this special event.

**Win Hots Shots Mini-Courts for our School**

Our school has registered with MLC Tennis Hot Shots to go in the running to win mini courts for our school. Log onto www.robintz.com.au and register your name to help our school win these courts. There are also individual prizes for students who register. Get on board so we can win this great sports facility for our school and maybe win a prize for yourself as well.

**STUDENTS OF THE WEEK**

Olivia Molloy, Jesse Errington, Leteisha Harding, Elizabeth Tsingolis, Elsha Gobius, Jett Casperson, Oliver Edwards, Valentino Cacace, Amelia MacKenzie, Sheridan Carter, Hayden Kershaw, Hana Maroney, Kathryn Wood, Brockie Martinell, Sienna Loftus, Nicholas Mouroua, Sienna Rendace, Kaya Tohere-Rudolph, Alyssa Campbell,

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH
Joseph Sweetnam, Xavier Benjamin, Tegan Clancy, Rianna Bogdan, Noah Simpson, Ava Layton, Axel Daly, Jace Ham, Mikayla Hayes, Brendan Lee, Bella Read, Halle Taffs, Katia Whitford, Ella Stewart, Kyoya Tazuko, Tianna Whitten, Ava Casperson, Jayde Pullin, Harry Fredrickson, Cerina Chan, Mia Boston, Shakira Williams, Jaden Gebbie, Kathrina Clarke, Maggie Koo Tam, Hope Adams, Melita Watts, Elissa Monte, Ryuki Chiba, Hudson Fort, Arielle Cameron, Riley Davies, Ruby Anderson.

P&C NEWS

Carols Evening
Volunteers are needed to assist Monday afternoon/night at the Carols. Please leave your name and phone number at the office if you can assist.

2014 Meetings
The first P&C meeting for 2014 will be held on Monday 10 February commencing at 6.30pm. The P&C AGM will be held in March next year.

P&C Surveys
Thank you to all those families who responded to the P&C surveys. Collated responses will be shared with our school community in future newsletters. Congratulations to Mrs Kylie Sexton who was drawn out as the lucky winner of a free book pack for returning her P&C survey.

BOOKSHOP NEWS for all your stationery and uniform needs
- Opening times: Mon - Wed - Fri 8am to 9am
- Orders can be placed at the bookshop or on flexischools.com.au
- Special Opening Times - The bookshop will open from 8am - 9am every day until the last day of school.

TUCKSHOP NEWS
Roster for week commencing 9 December

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Well we are almost at the end of another year! There is still plenty happening around our school before that day arrives. Many thanks to my volunteers this week. We have been extra busy and their help is very much appreciated. We hope you enjoyed the Volunteers Afternoon Tea! Please note next week meals will be disrupted. There are NO Flexischool orders for Thursday and Friday next week. Next Wednesday will be eagle Boys Pizza for Big Lunch to coincide with classroom parties. No ordered food after Wednesday Thursday 12th Will be over-the-counter sales only we reduce our final stocks before the holidays. We are NOT open on the last day of school. Have a good week everyone. ~ Denise ~

Merry Christmas from Chappy Steve...
I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone one a very Happy Christmas, and a fantastic New Year...This year I celebrated five years of being a part of the Merrimac State School family and during this time I have experienced many highs and lows whilst doing the job I do and love...This year has been fantastic with the introduction and the development of the Chappy Hut, and I would like to thank our P&C for the support they give me year after year, and I really appreciate it and I know the children do too...As far as I know no other chaplain in Queensland or in fact in the whole of Australia has a Chappy Hut like ours and the facilities that we provide.

At the moment the National Schools Chaplaincy program has once again come under attack by the same individual from Toowoomba and for the sake of our kids we hope that this program will be allowed to continue into the future...I would like to thank everyone who signed the Statement of Support...

I would like to say goodbye to all our Year 7 students who leave for high school, and to not worry, high school can be a lot fun. Also I would like to extend a special thank you to all the Year 7 students who helped run the Fitness Brekkie Club, without you it would just not happen...

Finally a massive thank you to all the staff here at Merrimac, you are an awesome team....Christmas is a happy time but it can also be a sad time for many. Please as you celebrate together with your family and friends keep in mind those who may have lost loved ones during the year and they are facing a Christmas with that empty chair....In our multicultural society the significance and meaning of Christmas may differ greatly but the underlying message is about Peace and Goodwill to all men and women across the globe.

May the God of Peace bless you all this Christmas, and I will see you all next year.

~ Chappy Steve ~

UPCOMING EVENTS

| Mon 9 Dec | Carols By Candlelight |
| Thurs 12 Dec | Year 7 Graduation Ceremony |
| Thurs 12 Dec | Year 7 Graduation Disco |
| Fri 13 Dec | Year 7 excursion |
| Fri 13 Dec | Last day of Term Four |

Keep a watch on our school these holidays
Parents and students can help take care of our school by reporting any suspicious after-hours activity to School Watch on 13 17 88. By keeping an eye out we can work together to create a safer school community and help to reduce vandalism, theft and arson in our school.

If you see something suspicious, please don’t intervene. Call the School Watch number and let the local police or State Government Protective Security Service deal with the matter.

Easier access to school information through updated version QSchools app
A recent update to the QSchools app means our parents will now be able to find tuckshop and class time information more easily. On top being able to access calendar, newsletter and other information from our school website the upgraded app can also access uniform shop information and school social media pages. It all makes staying in touch and up to date a little easier for your family. Visit the department's apps page for more information and all the features: http://deh.qld.gov.au/about/app/

The QSchools app is available for free download through iTunes, Google Play and the Window's store.

The Websites for Schools development team would love to hear your ideas for future functionality for QSchools. You can leave feedback within the app via Settings, then Leave Feedback.