Term 3 Week 5 Thursday 14 August 2014

Staffing News
For Term Four, Mrs Sloss, our Support Teacher, will be reducing her teaching role to four days a week (0.8). She will be taking each Monday as Long Service Leave. Mrs Prentis will be doing the 0.2 Support Teacher role of a Monday in Term Four. Mrs Hall, our lower school Deputy Principal, has Long Service Leave from 1 September to 24 October. This is six weeks of leave in total (three before the September holidays and three weeks after the September holidays). Mrs McNeilage will be acting Deputy Principal in Mrs Hall’s absence. Mr Boff will be the acting Head of Curriculum for these six weeks. Miss Butler-Davis, who taught Prep3 for five weeks last term, will again be replacing Mr Boff and teaching Prep 3. Mrs Beggs will be undertaking the NCT/CCT role (3 days week) and also teaching Year 3D of a Monday and Year 3C of a Friday for the six weeks. Mrs Cavalier has Long Service Leave from 8 to 16 September. Mrs Crawford will be replacing her for these seven days.

Choir Performances
Congratulations to both our Senior and Junior Choirs for their awesome performances at the Gold Coast Eisteddfod on Monday. Our Junior Choir sang beautifully and received a Third Place Trophy. Our Senior Choir were also fantastic on the night and were also placed Third. What a wonderful effort by both our two choirs. Thanks to parents and friends who came along to watch and support the children. Congratulations to Mrs Powell for the wonderful work that she has done with both choirs. Thanks also to Mrs Lush who accompanied the students on piano for their performances. See Music News for details of upcoming performances.

Balls on Roofs
Schools have been advised that there is a prohibition on DETE staff, students and volunteers being on, or working on roofs at Education Queensland facilities. This prohibition includes all roofs on buildings, structures and covered walkways at our school. Basically - no staff member will be able to collect balls/shoes / hats etc from roofs. This includes Mr Jeffrey our Facilities Officer. When the gutter cleaners or plumbers are at school, they will look for any personal items on roof and return to lost property.

National Excellence in Teaching (NEITA) Awards
The NEITA Foundation has congratulated our school on having four of our teaching staff nominated for an ASG Inspirational Teaching Award. Mrs Carole Hall, Miss Sanatha Jacobs, Mrs Jill Spencer and Mr Andrew Elliott were nominated by members of our school community in recognition of the great work that they do at Merrimac State School. Our award recipients were presented this week with a National Excellence in Teaching Award certificate as well as a small gift from our school’s P and C Association. The purpose of these prestigious awards is to honour and recognise inspirational teachers, as well as highlight the work not only of individual teachers throughout Australia, but also the team contribution of all teachers in every school.

Mrs Hall, Miss Jacobs, Mrs Spencer and Mr Elliott are now eligible for consideration for a National ASG Inspirational Teaching Award and grant. Congratulations to them all. I know that all our teachers at Merrimac do a fantastic job and parents appreciate the great work that they do each and every day.

Parliament House Visit
Last Wednesday Miss Murray and our student leaders visited Parliament House in Brisbane as special guests of the Member for Mudgeeraba, The Honourable Ros Bates. The group had a special guided tour of Parliament House and enjoyed lunch with Mrs Bates in the cafeteria before sitting in on Question Time.

Maths Filming
On Tuesday this week, our school had an Education Queensland film crew visit to film Maths lessons in Year 4C and 6C. EQ are developing a range of video clips to be used to improve the teaching of Maths. The videos are primarily produced for beginning and pre-service teachers but can be accessed by any DETE employee. The lessons went extremely well and both classes did a great job. Well done to Miss Rogers and Mrs Riis.

8 Hour Famine
If your child is interested in participating in the World 8 Hour Famine please get them to see Mr Epipa in 7A tomorrow for information and the sponsorship booklet. Participating students can collect sponsors or donations to help raise money for World Vision.

Life Education Program
The Life Education Van will be visiting our school towards the end of this term from 3 to 18 September. All students are invited to participate in the Life Education Program at Merrimac State School. Life Education is an important program that effectively educates children about health issues. The program puts students in situations where they need to make decisions, solve problems and interact with other students by discussing possible alternatives to problem situations relating to their own health. The Life Education visit is $7.00 per student. There will be a parent session on Wednesday 3 September commencing at 2.00pm in the Life Education Van. The van will be located at the end of the PAC building. Notes for payment will be sent home last week with all students.

School Audit
Last week our school had its official Financial and Operational Audit over three days. This audit is undertaken in schools every four years. I have received the audit report and our school did very well receiving an ‘Effective’ Rating which is the highest rating level. Congratulations to Mrs Yeates, our Business Services Manager and her office admin team for such outstanding work. I
have taken an extract from the audit report that shows how impressed our auditor was with our school.

"In the opinion of the Internal Audit the audit has indicated an Overall rating of Effective. The school administration staff are to be commended for the effective function of the internal controls and management of the systems operating in the school at the time of the audit visit. It was apparent that the diligence of the staff to the application of their duties ensures that the school processes were effective at the time of the audit visit. This school has always been a pleasure to audit. Well done. My sincere thanks to you and your staff for the welcome and cooperation received during the audit. Your assistance, openness to improvement and positive attitude was greatly appreciated and supported the audit process." - Jon Scott, School Auditor.

Student Attendance
For this year, our school has set an attendance target for our students at 95%. After Semester One we had only reached an attendance rate of 93%. This is slightly higher than our school's attainment of 92.5% in 2013. We still have some way to go to reach our 95% attendance target.

In our recent school audit, it was found that we had a high amount of 'unexplained' absences where parents have not notified the school as to why children are absent from school.

At the beginning of the year, I included this article in our school's newsletter. I thought that it is timely that I include it again as a reminder to parents the importance of high levels of attendance at school.

Research has shown that there is a direct correlation between student academic performance and school attendance. The attendance rate at our school for 2013 was 92.5%. This is very much in line with the state average. Our South East Education Region has set a target for its schools of 95% attendance rate. This is the target that our school has adopted as its target for 2014. Education Queensland is promoting its slogan that 'Every Day Counts'. Our school has a high number of students who attend school every day within a school year. As a school and as parents we should be continually stressing to our students the importance of attending school every day.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to fulfil their academic potential and there is also a legal requirement for students to attend school every day within a school year. As a school and as parents we should be continually stressing to our students the importance of attending school every day.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to fulfil their academic potential and there is also a legal requirement for parents/caregivers to ensure their children regularly attend an appropriate approved program of education. All parent/caregivers need to be aware of the following requirements for authorising student absences and late arrivals:

- All student absences must be authorised by a parent/carer. This can be done by sending a note in with the student on his/her return to school, by phoning or emailing the school office or by speaking to the relevant teacher in person. If you know your child will be away for three or more consecutive days, you must notify the school office. For absences ten days or longer, a special form needs to be completed by the parents.
- All late arrivals must be authorised by a parent/carer. Students who do not arrive at their classroom by 9.00am to report to the office on arrival at school to obtain a late slip. If students who arrive late are not accompanied to the office by a parent/carer, they will need to have a note to explain their reason for being late or the parent/carer will need to phone the office prior to the student's arrival.

For a small number of students, regular attendance is a problem. It is recognised that some students do suffer serious or reoccurring illnesses and occasionally pressing family matters or crises can stop some students from coming to school. Such absences are quite understandable, but some students seem to have regular absences, a day here and a day there, over the school year and often it is possible to see a pattern in these absences. All teachers mark their electronic rolls twice daily and it is possible to monitor student attendance on a regular basis.

Frequent absences make it difficult for students to keep pace with classwork and can make it difficult for teachers to properly assess students. Maximising attendance at school enhances students' academic progress and it helps prepare them for the expectations that will be required both at high school and later in life when they join the workforce. Please don't let your children down by letting them stay at home unnecessarily when they should be at school.

LOTE Speaking Competition
A number of our students will be participating in the LOTE speaking competition on this Sunday 17 August at Griffith University. Mrs Marshall has been practising with the students and I'm sure that they will do well. We wish them all the very best.

Gold Coast Show Holiday
A reminder to all students and parents that Friday 29th August is a Public Holiday for the Gold Coast Show Day. Please note the Merrimac Outside School Hours Care will not be operating on this day.

School Uniforms
It is pleasing to see the large majority of our children always dressed smartly in their school uniforms. However, with the cooler weather it has been noted that some students are starting to wear multi coloured jumpers. Students have been reminded at school that all jumpers should be in school colours. It is not necessary to have school jumpers with the school logo although this is encouraged.

Also all children know that they need a hat at school for outdoor play. Our children should also be wearing hats in school colours. Parents are asked to support this school rule as it is part of our school's approved dress code.

Footsteps
This week was the last days of the Footsteps Dance Program. This year the program has again gone very well with the students enjoying all aspects of the dance program. We will look into booking Footsteps again for 2015.

Breakfast and Fitness Program
The before school breakfast fitness program runs each of a Wednesday morning during Term 3. Children in Years 5, 6 and 7 may participate in this fitness program. It has been decided to open up the program to interested Year 4 students as well. Students will need to commit to attending each week from 8.00am to 8.45am to be part of the program. Thanks to Mr Epha, Mr Webster, Chappy Steve and their many helpers who assist with the program each week. We thank the P&C, Carrara Woolworths and Merrimac McDonalds for their ongoing support of this program.

Premier's Reading Challenge
The Premier's Reading Challenge continues until Friday 5 September. Keep up your reading.

Recycling Crayons
A few staff at Merrimac would like to collect all of the student's broken or unused crayons and zooms (wind-ups). We are going to recycle the broken parts and make new crayons to send to the children in Tanzania and hopefully to other countries around the world. We thought this might be a nice way to recycle the student's crayons and also teach them to appreciate their belongings. Please bring the crayons and zooms to P1M anytime. A box will be placed outside P1M each day. Thank you very much for your support.

~ Miss Coleman ~
Prep Enrolments for 2015
In October each year our school holds a morning and evening orientation session for our new families. In November we also hold Prep experience days for our future Prep students.
Parents are encouraged to start enrolling their children now. Early enrolment allows the school to be better prepared for the 2015 school year.
Now that our school has an official enrolment boundary, all families, especially those residing outside our catchment area, are encouraged to get their Prep enrolments in as early as possible as vacancies may be limited. All enrolments must include the student’s Birth Certificate. To date, we have 73 Prep students enrolled for next year, which is more than this time last year.

QSchools Smartphone App
The QSchools app is available to the school community as a free download via the Apple iTunes store and Google Play. QSchools is regularly updated with the latest news and alerts. Parents are encouraged to access this free App on their iPhone or Android phone and to update regularly to access the latest features.

Scholastic Book Fair 1st to 5th September
Scholastic Book Fair comes to our school from 1st to 5th September to share the newest books from more than 150 publishers with our young readers. Parents and teachers will find plenty of items to interest them too. The collection will arrive on Monday and be open for sales from 8.15am to 4pm Tuesday - Friday in the School’s library. Children will have the opportunity to view the book selection during their class time and parents are welcome to visit the library at any time during the week. The school receives a commission in books on all sales at the Book Fair. Don’t miss out on the fun and excitement of Book Fair.

Spare School Shirts
Several of our larger spare shirts have been loaned to children and not returned. If you have any shirts at home marked with a number in texta on the label please return to the school office. Also, if you have any shirts you no longer require we would appreciate having spares for accidents etc. Please send any donations to the school office, thank you.

P&C NEWS
Independent Public Schools (IPS)
At our P&C meeting on Monday evening, our P&C fully endorsed our school’s application to be an IPS in 2015. Our school is currently working on its IPS application. However, we still have to realise that although we are again applying to be an IPS, only 30 schools will be successful in 2015 and unfortunately we could miss out again.
Applications close on Friday 5 September. It hasn’t been announced when the successful schools will be notified, but if it is similar to last year, it won’t be till towards the end of the school year.

Fathers’ Day Stall
The P&C committee is very excited to inform parents and carers we will be holding a Father’s Day stall with some fantastic gifts for purchase the last 3 school days before Father’s Day. More information to follow but at this stage we would like to put a call out for volunteers who could spare an hour or 2 on the 3rd,4th or 5th Sept to please email their interest & availability to kristyamsspc@gmail.com

FINANCE NEWS
The finance window operates Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8.00am - 9.30am. These are the only times money is accepted. Parents should ensure payment is made by due dates as final numbers are often required and your child will miss out on an event if they have not paid by the due date. Pay early and avoid disappointment. We are currently accepting payments for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Payment Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yrs 6 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Graduation Shirts</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>3 Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yr 4</td>
<td>Bike</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>5 Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole School</td>
<td>Life Education</td>
<td>$7</td>
<td>1 Sept</td>
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PE NEWS
South East Queensland (SEQ) Soccer Final
Our Year 7 Boys Soccer Team took part last Friday in the SEQ Soccer Finals in Brisbane. The team did extremely well and were only narrowly defeated in their two matches. Well done to all the boys and to their coach Ms Parker for a fantastic effort throughout the whole season.

Oz Tag Competition
Next Monday 18 August our school has entered a boys’ and a girls’ team from each year level across years 5, 6 and 7 in the annual Oz Tag competition. We wish them well as they have been practising and training hard over the last few weeks.

Sporting Success
Congratulations to Oryaan Kololo who has been selected in the South Coast Regional Rugby Union team to take part in the State Championships towards the end of August. This is a great achievement as Oryaan also represented South Coast earlier this year in Rugby League. We wish him all the very best.

Year 4 and 5 PE Lessons
The Gold Coast SUNS as part of their work in the Community are proud to provide to students and schools within the Community, the innovative SHINE Schools Program. This program will be implemented with our Years 4 and 5 students over the next three weeks as part of their Physical Education Program. The SHINE schools program will allow the next generation to SHINE and be the best they can be and has already been delivered to over 2,500 students at 26 schools in 2013 through 15,000 hours of direct program delivery.

Each student who participates in the FREE six hour program will experience first hand and learn about:

- Being healthy
- Being active
- Beach safety
- Playing AFL
- Whole Yr 4
- Particpants
- $7
- Event: Life Education
- Cost: $7
- Payment: 1 Sept

What makes the SHINE program unique is that it is the first of its kind delivered in a three-way partnership consisting of the GC SUNS players and staff, City of Gold Coast Lifeguards and the AFL Queensland Game Development team. This innovative program is made possible by the generous support of both the Queensland Government and McDonald’s Gold Coast.

Each student will receive a colour booklet to use and work through as part of the program and will get to interact with the players in person as they deliver the program.
TUCKSHOP NEWS

Tuckshop Roster for Week commencing 18 August

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Mayumi</th>
<th>Meal Deal - 21 August $5.00*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Yoko M, Help Pla</td>
<td>Nachos w Salsa &amp; Cheese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Naoko, Yoko</td>
<td>Large muffin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Mayumi, Help Pla</td>
<td>Frozen Gelato Cup</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>Yoko, Mayumi</td>
<td>Bottled</td>
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*Add 50c extra to upgrade to Flavoured Milk or Sparkling Springwater

MUSIC NEWS

Eisteddfod Results

Congratulations! Junior Choir and Senior Choir both placed 3rd in the Gold Coast Eisteddfod. We are thrilled!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fri 15 Aug | Year 2 Excursion to Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary
Mon 18 Aug | Junior Inst & Ensemble Band Eisteddfod
Mon 18 Aug | Senior Band Eisteddfod
Mon 18 Aug | Oz Tag competition for selected years 5, 6 and 7 students
Tue 19 Aug | Junior Band Eisteddfod
Tue 26 Aug | Senior Strings Eisteddfod
Tue 26 Aug | Intermediate Strings Eisteddfod
Tue 26 Aug | Junior Strings Eisteddfod
Fri 29 Aug | Gold Coast Show Holiday
1 - 5 Sept | Scholastic Book Fair
Wed 3 Sept | Life Education Van visit commences
Fri 5 Sept | Interschool Sport commences
Sun 7 Sept | Canberra Trip 7-12 Sept
Mon 8 Sept | MOSHC Meeting
Mon 8 Sept | P&C Meeting
Tue 9 Sept | Year 4 Bike Education commences
Thurs 11 Sept | R U OK Day
Wed 17 Sept | Parent/Teacher Interviews
Fri 19 Sept | Last Day for Term Three

COMMUNITY NEWS

Robina State High School
2015 Enrolment Info Night
Thursday 21 August
5.30pm - 7.00pm
RSHS Performing Arts Complex
Interested Year 6 & 7 parents are invited to an enrolment information sessions. This session will provide an overview of their school, their curriculum, their specialised programs and their approach to Junior Secondary Education. For further details phone 5562 3444.

Merrimac State High School
Enrolment Information Evening
Tuesday 19 August 5.30pm - 6.30pm MSHS Library
Interested Year 6 & 7 parents are invited to attend

~ Currumbin Valley ~
Spring Festival
Sunday 14 September 9.30am - 2.00pm
Live Music, Market Stalls, Rock Climbing, Farmyard Feeding, Jumping Castle, Games, Arts & Craft, Food, Deck Bar & More!
STALL HOLDERS WANTED – From $10
1226 Currumbin Creek Road
Currumbin Valley 4223 Ph: 5533 0312
info@currumbinfarmschool.eq.edu.au

This annual community event has something for everyone offering a great mixture of live music, market stalls, deck bar, rock climbing, kids' entertainment, bush tucker trail, plants and more! A showcase of original live music will get your feet tapping and Farmyard Friends animal feeding enclosure will keep the kids busy for hours.
Make a day of it! The festival is set amongst beautiful picnic gardens and is ideally located across the road from the Currumbin Rock Pools, surrounded by the picturesque views of Currumbin Valley. If live music is your thing, all you will need is a picnic blanket for a day of relaxing fun. What a great way to spend the Day!