Term 4 Week 1 Thursday 9 October 2014
Welcome to a New School Term
The school term has already started at a busy pace with a number of new enrolments on the first day back. Our current school enrolment is 851 students. We would like to welcome all new families to Merrimac and we look forward to an exciting Term 4. This term is ten weeks and I’m sure with all the school happenings and special events, it will go very quickly.

P&C Meeting
The next P&C meeting will be held on Monday 13 October at 6.30pm in the Staffroom. All parents are welcome to attend. Also the Merrimac Outside School Hours Care meeting will be held on the same evening commencing at 5.45pm in the MPC.

Staffing News
Mrs Lamburd is currently on Long Service Leave till 17 October and Mrs Justina Crawford is replacing her for this time. Mr Chris Haddock will be replacing Mrs Barrett each Thursday this term and be teaching P4 on this day. Mrs Barrett will be undertaking some IPad Professional Development for Prep Teacher’s and will be teaching P4 on this day. Mrs Barrett will be undertaking some IPad Professional Development for Prep Teachers and Teacher Aides. Mrs Hall still has three more weeks of Long Service Leave and returns on Monday 27 October.

Kay Kirby who has been a casual cleaner at our school for quite some time has now been made officially permanent for 15 and a half hours per week commencing from 17 October.

Staff Transfers
Staff transfers were released at the end of last term. Mrs Sheren McLean who has been on leave from our school for the last four years has received a transfer to Palm Beach State School. Mrs Joanne Sutton who has also been on leave from our school for a number of years has received a transfer to Dalby South State School. Her husband has been appointed as Principal to a neighbouring school in that region. Both Mrs McLean and Mrs Sutton are very happy with their requested transfers. Sadly, we will be losing Mr Elliott to Gaven State School and Mrs Haywood to Ashmore State School. Both are fantastic teachers and will be assets to their new schools. We wish them all the very best.

Mr Smith, who works at Merrimac each Wednesday as a PE teacher, has been transferred to Coolangatta State School. We wish Mr Smith all the best at his new school and thank him for all he has done at Merrimac. For next year Mr Singh will be reverting back to a full time PE teacher at our school.

Merrimac school has no teachers being transferred in for next year. Our school was identified as being over staffed for next term and I’m sure with all the school happenings and special events, it will go very quickly.

Student Leadership Process for 2015
The leadership process for the positions of Student Leaders, House Captains and Music Captains will start in the next few weeks. The student leader process has a strong emphasis on written applications, responses to a range of scenarios, reflection on leadership, preparation and presentation of speech along with a detailed analysis of behaviour and academic history. Information gathered through the process is considered by a panel of teachers with recommendations for appointment made to the Principal.

The selection of House Captains and Music Captains will commence when the student leaders are finalised. Students in each house will have the opportunity to elect their captains. Our music staff will meet to determine the positions of Music Captains.

92.5 Gold FM Visit
Our visit from Gold FM on the last day of term was a big success. Our school received some very positive promotion by having the live broadcast from our school. The children and parents who visited the school that morning all had a fantastic time. Thanks to Melissa Strudwick for coordinating the sausage sizzle and to all the school staff and parents who assisted on the morning. A total of $458 was raised for the Give Me Five for Kids Appeal.

Transition to High School
With all of our Year 6 and 7 students transitioning to high school at the end of this year, staff have been very busy planning a program that will ease the stress and anxiety involved in such a move. While this can be a stressful time for students we are hopeful that with the plans we have in place, we can help our students to feel confident about this move and approach high school with confidence and enthusiasm.

Transition life skills program:
This program has been designed to help our Year 6 and 7 students cope with their upcoming transition to high school. The following areas will be covered:
- Week 1- Self-esteem, strengths and weaknesses
- Week 2- Making Friends
- Week 3-Bullying
- Week 4- Dealing with stress and Anxiety
- Week 5- Cyber Safety
- Week 6- Responsibilities and organisation at high school
- Week 7- Work at High school, reading and understanding criteria sheets
- Week 8- Summary and Staying in touch.

Classroom teachers will be covering these topics each week this term while Mrs Prentis and Mrs O’Rourke will also be holding more intensive sessions with students who we believe require a more structured support program.

If your child has received learning support in the past or has learning difficulties we have plans in place to smooth the transition process. Mrs Prentis will be in close communication with the high school learning support departments and any relevant information will be passed on.

We will be taking selected students (and their parents) to Merrimac High school to meet with the learning support teacher and have a guided tour of the high school in Week 5. Letters will be sent home with all the details.

The learning support teacher from St Michael’s will be visiting our school later this term to meet with students who may require extra support next year. She is also happy to answer any questions that students or parents may have regarding the learning support program at St Michael’s. We may also arrange an excursion to Robina High if we feel it is necessary.

Please make an appointment with Mrs Prentis or Miss Murray if you have any questions regarding our transition program.
Year 7 Debating Day
On Thursday 23 October our school will be hosting the district debating tournament. Our Year 7 students will be involved in this day and we wish them well. A big thank you to Mrs Messinbird and Mrs Fields who are coordinating this event and to all their many helpers.

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 children 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:

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Human Relationships Education (HRE)
Last year our school used Family Planning Queensland to run our school's HRE Sexuality Program. A decision has been made to again use them this year. The HRE program involves Years 5, 6 and 7 only. The P&C and school will be jointly funding the program so there will be no cost to the students. The content of the program will be very similar to previous years. A number of schools are using Family Planning Queensland to present their school's HRE.

A parent session will be held next Wednesday 15 October from 2.15 pm to 3.15pm in the MPC Conference Room. This session will be run by a representative from Family Planning Queensland. It will familiarise parents with the content of the HRE program and the resources involved. Interested parents are invited to attend. The meeting will be quite relevant to new parents and parents of upper school children.

The Family Planning HRE student sessions will be held in the week beginning Monday 17 November. A timetable for each of the classes will be developed and published in a future newsletter.

Class Newsletters
Class Newsletters will be sent home next Friday 17 October by all class teachers. Class Newsletters are an important form of communication between school and home. They outline curriculum content for the term, reminders about class rules, behaviour management, teacher expectations and homework expectations. Any special events and activities will also be highlighted in the Class Newsletters.

2015 Prep Enrolments
We are currently accepting Prep enrolments for 2015. Enrolment packs are available at the office. All enrolments must be accompanied by the child’s birth certificate and proof of residency. The school will be holding a Prep Orientation Day on Wednesday 29 October 2014 in the MPC. The morning program runs from 9.00am to 11.00am and the evening program runs from 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Parents will have the opportunity to purchase Book Kits and Uniforms at the end of each of the sessions.

The school also arranges a school experience morning for new Prep students in November. We have found that these mornings are invaluable in demystifying the school environment and help children to have a better start to the school 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.

Dates to remember:
Monday 3rd November St Michaels Learning support teacher to visit our school.
Wednesday 5th November Year 6 Learning support excursion to Merrimac High 1:30-3pm
Thursday 6th November 1:30-3pm Year 7 Learning support excursion to Merrimac High.

Sports/Musical Photos Wednesday 15 October
Silver Rose will be visiting our school on Wednesday 15 October to photograph the current sports teams and musical groups. Ordering will be available online @ www.silverrose.com.au/schools
Username: Groups Password: 285023 approximately one week after the groups have been photographed. The photo size is 25cm x 20cm and the cost is $15. All children participating in the groups will be included in the photo. The groups to be photographed are:
- Junior Choir
- Senior Choir
- Beginner Strings
- Junior Band
- Intermediate Strings
- Senior Band
- Senior Strings
- Softball A
- Softball B
- Yr5 Boys Touch
- Yr6 Boys Touch
- Yr7 Boys Touch
- Yr6 Girls Touch
- Yr7 Girls Touch
- 6B Basketball
- 7 Basketball

Also being photographed will be: Years 6 and 7 Graduation Catch ups. Silver Rose can be contacted on 3262 5788 for any questions regarding photos.

Platinum Cards/Merit Certificates
Overall the standard of behaviour last term was good with a pleasing number of our children eligible for Platinum Certificates. Merit Certificates (5 or less points with no L4 or L5) for Term 3 will be sent home this week. 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.

Work Over the Holidays
Quite a bit of work was undertaken around the school over the holiday period. All carpets were cleaned, a shade structure was erected in the Prep area, new games line markings were done on selected concrete areas around the school and a number of identified unsafe trees were removed. Many of our Year 3 and 4 children have been playing in the area on the eastern side of the Year 3 and 4 buildings (old nature trail area). We had an Arborist’s report identifying many unsafe trees in this area which needed to be addressed. The long term plan is to create a turfed terraced area for our children to be able to play without fear of falling branches. Hopefully, this project will be completed over the upcoming Christmas holidays.

Term Four Y Lead
For the past five years, in Term Four, our school has been involved in the Y Lead student leadership day at Miami High School. This will again happen and we will be sending 30 of our Year 5 students to this year’s Y Lead Day. Students who have displayed leadership abilities throughout the year have been invited to attend these days. More information has been provided to the nominated students. The date for the Y Lead day is next Thursday 16 October at Miami State High School. Mrs Johns will be attending with our students.

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Music News

**MUSIC COUNT US IN – SURFERS PARADISE**
The Merrimac Senior Choir has been chosen to represent our school at this year's Music Count Us In Performance at Surfers Paradise.

On Thursday October 30th at 11.00am, selected students from our Senior Choir will be performing at the Skypoint Observation Deck Q1 as a part of Music Count Us In.

Each year on October 30th at 11:30am schools across the nation have participated in Music Count Us In: Australia’s biggest school initiative. More than 600,000 students, teachers and parents from schools all over Australia sign up to learn, rehearse, then perform the same song, on the same day, at the same time.

Once again, this year students from Gold Coast Schools will be taking this initiative to "new Heights". Students will perform this year's Music Count Us In song, "Paint You a Song" atop the Q1 and on Surfers Paradise Beach while students around the country will be singing along via a live feed on the music count us in website. [http://www.musiccountusin.org.au](http://www.musiccountusin.org.au)

Notes have been sent home with the Senior Choir students. Please return the notes and payment ASAP if you want your child to attend.

**Instrumental Band News**
Recruiting for 2015 has now commenced. Due to the Year 6 students moving to high school next year, Education Queensland have allowed Year 4s to join the band program. Therefore all Year 3 and 4 students will be tested this year. Students will be mouth tested on band instruments to find which instrument is most suitable for them. Other areas assessed are:

- Physical attributes
- Academic results
- Ability to work independently
- Behaviour

Every student will have the opportunity to try out. To test everyone will take several weeks. Successful applicants will be notified midway through next term. It’s a fun time and I look forward to meeting prospective new students in the weeks ahead.

**Strings Recruitment for 2015**
Last term year two students were issued with an invitation to join the strings program for 2015. Instruments on offer include Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass. Places are limited and once all applications have been received, students will be assessed for their suitability to join the program. Please ensure your child has returned the reply slip before the end of term three. Spare copies will be held in the office.

**Change to Strings timetable for Term 4**
**Beginner Strings** will now be held on Tuesdays = Beginner Strings Ensemble before school from 7.50 and lessons as per new timetable.

**Senior Strings** will now be held on Wednesdays = Senior Strings before school from 7.50 and lessons as per new timetable.

**Intermediate Strings** will still be held on Tuesdays = Intermediate Strings.

Thanks to all students for their hard work this term. Have a wonderful, well-deserved holiday.

Helen Hurst (Strings Instructor)

**SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB**
Book Club brochures were given to students in class this week. If you wish to make a purchase, please follow these instructions:-

- Complete the order form on the back of the brochure including the child’s name, class and phone number at the top;
- Clearly label an envelope with “Book Club Order”;
- Into this envelope, place the order form together with correct money or cheque payable to Scholastic Australia (or utilise the credit card option on the order form);
- Put the envelope in the box at the finance window at school (finance window is open Mon/Wed/Fri only);

**ORDERS CLOSE**
9.00AM FRIDAY, 17TH OCTOBER
COMMUNITY NEWS

Your Health Options
On Thursday 18th September, when your child/ren took part in 'Health and Wellbeing Day' they listened to a Nutrition talk by Chelsea Everingham, Naturopath and Nutritionist. Chelsea was impressed by the children’s knowledge of nutrition and enthusiasm to learn more about the choices they can make for lifelong health. To help keep your family healthy take advantage of this offer for Merrimac State School Families only for 50% off each family member's initial appointment. Call Chelsea on 0413176241 to make an appointment. Chelsea commonly helps with health complaints such as allergies, asthma, eczema, gastrointestinal complaints, weight loss and detoxification, anxiety and depression, eating disorders, insomnia, acute and chronic pain and stress related conditions.

50% off
Chelsea Everingham, Qualified Naturopath 0413 176 241 Private health rebates apply. Please check with your fund.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 10 Oct</td>
<td>Interschool Sport resumes</td>
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<td>Mon 13 Oct</td>
<td>6.30pm P&amp;C meeting</td>
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<td>5.45pm Outside School Hours Care meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 15 Oct</td>
<td>School Sport and Music Photo Day</td>
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<td>Wed 15 Oct</td>
<td>2.00pm to 2.55pm HRE Parent Session in MPC Conference Room</td>
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<td>Thurs 16 Oct</td>
<td>Year 5 Y Lead day at Miami High School (selected students)</td>
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<td>Sun 19 Oct</td>
<td>P&amp;C Family Portraits</td>
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<td>Mon 20 Oct</td>
<td>Pupil Free Day</td>
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<td>Tues 21 Oct</td>
<td>Surf Presentations</td>
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<td>Thurs 23 Oct</td>
<td>Inter School Debating Day at Merrimac</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 29 Oct</td>
<td>Prep Orientation Day (9.00am and 6.00pm)</td>
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<td>Thurs 30 Oct</td>
<td>Gold Coast Music Count Us In (Senior Choir)</td>
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<td>1 and 2 Nov</td>
<td>Redland Bay interschool Touch Competition</td>
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<td>Wed 5 Nov</td>
<td>School Disco (Week 5)</td>
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<td>Mon 10 Nov</td>
<td>2.00pm to 2.55pm Merrimac High to talk to Years 6 and 7</td>
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<td>10 and 11 Nov</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Audit)</td>
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<td>Tues 11 Nov</td>
<td>Remembrance Day</td>
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<td>Thurs 13 Nov</td>
<td>Prep Experience Day (2 groups)</td>
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<td>15 and 16 Nov</td>
<td>620 Summit in Brisbane</td>
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<td>Mon 17 Nov</td>
<td>7.00pm Robina High Awards Night</td>
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<td>Years 5, 6 and 7 Family Planning HRE lessons</td>
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<td>Wed 19 Nov</td>
<td>Magic of Music Concert</td>
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<td>Thurs 20 Nov</td>
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<td>Fri 21 Nov</td>
<td>Last day of Interschool Sport</td>
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<td>Mon 1 Dec</td>
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<td>Thurs 4 Dec</td>
<td>Year 7 Transition Day to Merrimac SHS</td>
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<td>Thurs 4 Dec</td>
<td>RE Christmas Presentations</td>
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<td>Mon 8 Dec</td>
<td>Carols By Candlelight</td>
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<td>Tues 9 Dec</td>
<td>Report Cards to go home</td>
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