Term 4 Week 6 Thursday 13 November 2014

Independent Public School (IPS)

Last week, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Mr John-Paul Langbroek, officially announced that our school was successful with our application to be an Independent Public School for the commencement of 2015. This is fantastic news for our school community. The Independent Public Schools initiative is part of the Government’s commitment to improve outcomes for all Queensland state school students.

The IPS initiative recognises that the best decision-making often happens at the local level.

By embracing independence, our school will have greater autonomy in the decisions that are made to deliver the best possible outcomes for our students and our community.

As one of 130 Independent Public Schools, our school will benefit from:
- enhanced local governance;
- opportunities for innovation;
- a locally tailored workforce;
- increased financial flexibility; and
- less red tape

Our school’s application was successful because it demonstrated that our school is ready to take on the challenge and innovate to lift our school’s performance - and that we have the support of our school community to do this.

Mr Langbroek gave his assurance that our school has the full support of the Department as we plot our path forward. He conveyed his congratulations and best wishes to our school community. Mr Langbroek looks forward to working with our teachers, parents and wider school community to deliver the very best education for our students.

Mrs Ros Bates, the State Member for Mudgeeraba also expressed her congratulations to our school community and also looks forward to working closely with our school community.

I will keep parents informed of any further news in relation to becoming an IPS in 2015.

Master Teacher Position for 2015

We also received some additional positive news last week, when our school was allocated a fulltime Master Teacher position for the next three years. This initiative is part of the Government’s Action 5 under Great teachers = Great results: A direct action plan for Queensland schools.

The goal of the State Schools Strategy 2014-2018 is that every student is succeeding. The work of Master Teachers will assist to ensure that this occurs. The role will focus on improving literacy and numeracy and will also build capacity through action research. In this way we can develop high yield strategies for improvement with a strong evidence base.

Master Teachers have been allocated to support improved literacy and numeracy outcomes in those schools where they can make the greatest difference. This decision has been informed by the latest data on student performance and gain, and in consideration of the full range of support currently provided to schools.

From 2015, 300 new Master Teacher positions will be created to ensure quality teachers are working where they can make the greatest difference.

Master Teachers will have responsibility for leading activities and key tasks in their school and/or cluster. These will include:
- Working with instructional leaders to prioritise the teaching of literacy and numeracy within the school’s curriculum and pedagogical framework
- Improving and enhance pedagogical practice for all staff by researching and modelling quality teaching across all year levels
- Providing coaching and guidance to teachers and other staff in delivering quality teaching
- Improving the capacity of school teams to use evidence-based assessment to inform teaching and learning
- Supporting all staff in the analysis of, and response to, systemic and student data.

The allocation of a Master Teacher position to our school will certainly enhance the learning opportunities for our students.

Teaching and Learning Audit and Discipline Audit

On Monday and Tuesday this week, our school undertook its Teaching and Learning Audit and Discipline Audit. This is part of our four year school review. Three Education Queensland Principals audited all our teaching and learning practices and our discipline processes.

During their two days at the school, the auditors looked at our school’s learning programs and spoke to school leaders, teachers, teacher aides, the P&C President, parents and students.

The feedback from the auditors at the end of the process was very positive. They all remarked that Merrimac was a great school and we should be proud of our achievements.

An official audit report will be forwarded in the next three days and I will be able to feedback to our school community the findings and recommendations over the next few weeks. The recommendations from the audit will be incorporated into our school’s Quadrennial School Review (QSR) and give direction for the school over the next four years. Well done to everyone who contributed to the success of our school audit this year.

Quadrennial School Review (QSR) – Have you completed your parent survey?

Every four years, schools are required to undertake a Quadrennial School Review. The review is to determine how well the school has done over the last four years and to make recommendations for the next Four Year Plan from 2015 to 2018. Results from our QSR will be shared with the school community as will our next Four Year Plan. As part of our school’s QSR we would like to have input from our parents in a range of areas. A QSR Parent Survey has been developed and is available online. Parents are asked to...
Staffing News

Mrs Prentis has Long Service leave from 17 to 27 November. Miss McNeilage has Long Service leave from 17 November through till the end of the school year. Mr Boff will be replacing Mrs Mc as our acting Head of Curriculum. Miss Amber Butler-Davis will continue to teach P3 till the end of the term.

Visit by our Federal Member

Mrs Karen Andrews, the Federal Member for McPherson, visited our lower school parade on Wednesday this week to present the school with a new Australian Flag. We appreciate Mrs Andrews’ ongoing support of our school.

LOTE 2015

The teaching of LOTE in state schools is compulsory across Years 5 to 8. At Merrimac we value the teaching of Japanese and have always commenced the teaching of LOTE in earlier years. From the start of next year, students will study Japanese at Merrimac from Years 3 to 6. Our school has a strong international program and our Japanese Sister School Program has been in place since 2001. Mrs Marshall, our Japanese teacher, is very excited to be offering our Japanese program from the start of Year 3.

Merrimac - Katsuragi Sister School Exchange

Merrimac State School has been involved in a sister school arrangement with Katsuragi Elementary School in Japan since 2001. We have successfully hosted students from Katsuragi six times since 2004. Katsuragi has hosted us on alternate years and 2015 marks our seventh visit. Katsuragi Elementary School is located a short drive through the mountain from the City of Kobe. The 2015 Japan visit is proposed for 17-26 September, pending Education Queensland approval. For parents of students who are interested in going on the exchange, Merrimac State School will be holding an information meeting at 3.15-4.00pm on Tuesday 18 November in the Japanese teaching room. Students brought home a pamphlet last week, explaining some of the details that will be discussed at the meeting. Expressions of interest will close on Friday 21 November. The "Nihon Keiken" program will be open to all students who will be enrolled at Merrimac State School in 2015 in Years 5 and 6. Expressions of interest will be reviewed in relation to a selection criteria (language studies, leadership, initiative, social and emotional readiness, independence, behaviour and effort in school).

Head of Special Education (HOSE)

For the start of 2015 our school will be eligible for a full time Head of Special Education position. This is in response to our growing student numbers in our Special Education Program. An acting HOSE position has been advertised and will commence from the start of next year.

Year 6 and 7 Graduation

The Year 6 Graduation Ceremony will be held on Thursday 11 December in our Performing Arts Centre (PAC) from 10.00am to 1.30pm.

The Year 7 Graduation Ceremony will be held on Wednesday 10 December in our Performing Arts Centre (PAC) from 10.00am to 1.30pm.

A Year 6 and 7 only student disco will be held on Thursday 11 December at 6.30pm - 8.00pm in the MPC. On the last day of term our Year 6 and 7 students will enjoy a special day at Wet n Wild (subject to a behaviour review).

End of Year Reporting

Report Cards for Prep to 7 will go home on Tuesday 9 December. If parents have any concerns regarding their child’s report, they are encouraged to arrange a meeting with their child’s teacher. Parent/Teacher interviews, if needed, can be arranged in the last week of the term.

School Uniform Donation

Parents whose children finish at Merrimac at the end of the school year may like to donate their child’s old uniforms to our school reserve supply. This would greatly help our spare clothing pool for when children have accidents at school or 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 black shoes donations.

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 use them again 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. The Family Planning HRE student sessions will be held in the week beginning Monday 17 November.

Carols

It’s that time of year again, the season of giving and Christmas celebrations. The annual Merrimac Christmas Carols event is fast approaching and scheduled for the evening of Monday 8th December. Recently a letter about Kmart Wishing Tree donations was sent home and next week another letter will be sent home appealing to your generosity for Hamper donations. We ask that families begin to consider donating a small gift for a child, adult or grandparent to assist with making Christmas a little brighter. All labelled and unwrapped gift donations, which will be given to the Salvation Army, can be delivered to 4C or 4D along with hamper items which will be raffled on the night. We thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity in making Christmas a little brighter for someone less fortunate.

Parental Educational Requests - 2015

The process for allocating children to classes is a complex process where class teachers, support teachers and administration use their professional judgement to consider the academic, social and emotional needs of all students and how these needs can be best met the following year. Determining the best possible educational environment for all children is a high priority. If you are aware of specific educational needs for your child, please list these concerns on the form available from the school office. This form is not intended for specific teacher requests but for genuine educational issues.

Teacher class allocations have not been finalised at this stage and will not be finalised till the end of term. Parent requests will be considered in light of providing the best possible educational placement for all students. Because of a number of factors, it is not always possible to meet all parent requests. Multiple requests concerning the same child should not be made and cannot be catered for.

Forms are available from the school office and must be submitted to the office by 3pm Friday 14 November. After this date, class requests will only be considered if operationally convenient to the school.

Parent Information Booklets

New Parent Information Booklets for 2015 have been prepared. These are provided to all new enrolments and beginning Prep families. Additional copies are available from the school office for
anyone who may be interested in obtaining a copy. The Parent Information Book is also available on the school’s website.

**QSchools Smartphone App**
The QSchools app is available to the school community as a free download via the Apple iTunes store and Google Play. Update regularly to access the latest features.

**Student Placements 2015**
If your child will not be returning to Merrimac in 2015 please fill out the slip at the end of this newsletter and return it to the school office by Friday 14 November. This will assist in the placements for next year. Please note this does not apply to Year 6 and 7 students in 2014.

**Next P&C Meeting**
The final P&C meeting for the year will be held on Monday 1 December commencing at 6.30pm in the school Admin Building.

**Apple Slinky Days**
It’s been great to see the children so enthusiastic to eat fresh fruit. They love having their apple slinky’s. Due to all the busy weeks, our Year 5’s haven’t been able to help out. We are looking for any mum’s that are still in the school, who could help out for the remainder of the year to slinky apples at morning tea?? Slinky’s are between 10:55am and 11:15am every Monday, Wednesday or Friday morning tea. Any morning you could help would be great. Come and visit Melissa in P1M anytime for a slinky base.

**Final Scholastic Book Club for the Year**
Book Club brochures are being 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 21” NOVEMBER**

**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 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Payment Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Seaworld Entry Seaworld Bus</td>
<td>$23</td>
<td>14 Nov</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years 6/7</td>
<td>Graduation Activities</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>21 Nov</td>
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Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers this week. Your help is always very much appreciated. We are slowly reducing some items from our stock as we head into the last four weeks of school this year! Where has the time gone. We will notify the student if we have exhausted some products ordered and find a suitable replacement.

Flexischool orders will cease after Friday 5 December but we will continue with over the counter order until Wednesday 10 December. Have a good week everyone. ~ Denise ~

**INTERSCHOOL SPORTS DRAW 14 NOVEMBER**

**Boys Touch at Mallawa Drive, Palm Beach**
- 5A v Caningeraba on Field 1 @ 1.35pm
- 5B v William Duncon on Field 1 @ 12.50pm
- 6A v St Andrews on Field 7 @ 1.35pm
- 6B v Burleigh Heads on Field 12 @ 12.50pm
- 7B v Worongary on Field 9 @ 12.50pm

**Basketball at St Andrews Lutheran College, Tallebudgera**
- 6B v St Andrews 2 on Court 1 @ 12.45pm
- 7B v St Andrews 2 on Court 1 @ 1.15pm

**Girls Touch at Robina Common Fields**
- 5A v TBA @ 1.30pm
- 6A v TBA @ 12.45pm
- 6B v TBA @ 1.30pm
- 7A v TBA @ 1.30pm
- 7B v TBA @ 12.45pm

**Softball at Coplicks Fields, Tallebudgera**
- Team A v Elanora on Field 1 @ 12.50pm
- Team B v Caningeraba on Field 3 @ 12.50pm

**MUSIC NEWS**

**Magic of Music Concert Wednesday 19 November**
The Merrimac State School Magic of Music Concert next week in the Merrimac State School PAC Hall from 6pm until 8pm. All friends and family welcome. **Entry Fee: Gold Coin Donation**

**STUDENTS OF THE WEEK**
Luca Shaw, Sienna Everett, Preston Pratt, Elliot Van Den Broek, Oliver Godlee, Crystal Huang, Xavier McNabb, Mikayla Athfield, Tia Ryder-Leslie, Nockdy Nfor, Tegan Clancy, Zara Le Gros, Jasmine Bleyenberg, Joshua Roux, Flora Chen, James Galligan, Brock Lama, Sarah Berghuis, Tara Harrington, Jeremy Mikesa, Shanaye-Louise Solomon, Jake Machell, Summer Murray, Bryce Pearce, Kayde Paipa, Zander Engel-Bowe, Jhai Organ, Iona Glover, Sorato Mae, Erica Tal, Tiana Martin-Banks, Ella Cobby, Ella

**TUCKSHOP NEWS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roster for week commencing 17 November:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 17/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mayumi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meal Deal 20 Nov $5.00*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 18/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yoko M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 19/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naoko, Yoko H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 20/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria S, Mayumi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 21/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yoko H, Mayumi</td>
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</tbody>
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*Add 50c extra to upgrade to Springwater or flavoured milk

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Tea and Coffee will be served for parents from 5.15pm - 5.55pm
APPLICATIONS FOR 2015 BUS PASSES ARE DUE NOW
ALL NEW PASSENGERS FOR 2015
To ensure timely distribution of bus passes in the New Year, please submit your application before the end of November 2014.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EXISTING BUS PASS HOLDERS
At the end of each school year, please ensure that the current pass is retained to be used in the new school year until the new pass is issued.
Students with an existing bus pass need only re-apply for a 2015 bus pass if your child is:
- moving from Primary to Secondary School
- repeating a grade
- changing their home address or school

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION FORMS
Information on the School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS), eligibility and application forms is available from TransLink:

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO
Surfside Buslines
PO Box 3036
ROBINA
Q 4230

Email schools@tagroup.net.au or Fax 5571 6556
Applications will be processed over the Christmas school holidays. Once applications are approved, bus passes are sent to school for collection. Please allow 10-15 working days from the start of Term One 2015.

Prior to Government approval of bus travel assistance, all students can travel by bus to school using a TransLink gocard.

REMEMBER
A valid bus pass must be produced TO THE DRIVER or the relevant fare paid via cash or gocard. Information on fares, gocards, zones and bus timetables is available from TransLink:

UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<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>Mon 17 Nov</td>
<td>Years 5, 6 and 7 Family Planning HRE lessons</td>
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<td>Tues 18 Nov</td>
<td>3.15pm to 4.00pm Parent meeting of interested Years 5 and 6 students wishing to go to Japan in 2015 (in LOTE room)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 19 Nov</td>
<td>Magic of Music Concert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 20 Nov</td>
<td>Prep Experience Day (2 groups)</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>
<td>5.45pm Outside School Hours Care meeting</td>
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<td>Mon 1 Dec</td>
<td>6.30 pm P&amp;C meeting</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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<tr>
<td>Mon 8 Dec</td>
<td>Carols By Candelight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 9 Dec</td>
<td>Report Cards to go home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 9 Dec</td>
<td>Year 6 Transition Day to Merrimac SHS</td>
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<td>Wed 10 Dec</td>
<td>Year 7 Graduation Ceremony</td>
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<td>Thurs 11 Dec</td>
<td>Year 6 Graduation Ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 11 Dec</td>
<td>Years 6 and 7 Graduation Disco</td>
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<td>Fri 12 Dec</td>
<td>Last day of Term Four</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 12 Dec</td>
<td>Years 6 and 7 excursion Wet n Wild</td>
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