Hi Folks

Living in this part of the world we are regularly envied by those from southern states and their cooler climates. At present the water temperature at the beach is 23 degrees Celsius, whereby our maximum daily temperature is hovering between 25 and 27 degrees. Currently our autumnal weather with clear skies, lovely warm days and cooler nights has been exceptional and while winter is not far away we are extremely fortunate to call this part of the world home.

Great to catch up with a few local residents last Friday night at the community barbecue. These gatherings are a wonderful opportunity to touch base, have a chat, find out how everyone is going and support the local hall committee. Having the function commence at the family friendly time assists parents with younger children to provide dinner, socialise and catch up while having the kids in bed by a reasonable time. A big thank you to those hall committee members that got the soiree up and running.

Interviews

In the past, people, on several occasions have simply ‘lobbed’ anticipating an interview or a discussion about their child or children’s progress. While I regularly have informal discussions with parents and carers about students I want to stress that I’m not undervaluing that informality of those talks but aiming to apply a more formal, documented discussion about each child’s education.

During week 6 I will be conducting parent interviews to discuss student progress and any areas of concern and where parents can support students’ continued improvement. Danni is currently drawing up a range of fifteen minute timeslots and the allocation will be based on first in first served. I am eager to ensure each parent / parents are well informed about where their child/children are situated around current progress. There will be a hard copy for you to sign in the tuckshop from Monday morning 18th May. Please be advised that as we have 11 families we’ve only allocated 11 timeslots.
**Naplan**

By the time you receive this newsletter our yearly assessment program for literacy and numeracy will have been completed for another year. This year, without year sevens, we only have five students participating in the national testing which covers student’s skills and knowledge around reading, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy. These tests can be quite challenging for students and in some instances for adults as well. Students have been encouraged to simply do their best, answer all the questions and above all do not worry unnecessarily about them. At this stage they will be part of life for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students for several years to come yet.

I have added this week the following excerpt from Michael Fay’s (President-QASSP) monthly newsletter of the Queensland Association of State School Principals for an additional insight into the Naplan debate for your perusal.

However, it is interesting that with each passing year, there seems to be a greater focus on the deleterious effects of high stakes testing with psychologists appearing on a number of television shows as well as in print media this week to discuss the negative effects children (and sometimes parents) are experiencing as well as possible strategies to mitigate these. In yesterday’s Courier-Mail, Brittany Vonow quoted clinical psychologist Emily O’Leary who said there was a spike in parents seeking help in the lead-up to NAPLAN and again before the test results were due to be released. She also suggested children were increasingly stressed, experiencing vomiting, sleeplessness and wanting to avoid school.

In today’s Courier-Mail, Christopher Bantick points out that:

NAPLAN was never intended to be a means to assess schools against one another and thereby single out schools on the basis of test scores for praise or purgatory. It has however morphed into something approximating hysteria in some schools.

It is little surprise that problems such as these have arisen yet again in 2015 because it is almost exactly a year since the Whitlam Institute released the report The Experience of Education: The impacts of high stakes testing on school students and their families.

In the foreword of this report, the Director of the Whitlam Institute, Eric Sidoti wrote:

It is time to open the debate to alternative approaches to ensure that the development of literacy and numeracy in our schools is assessed and reported upon in a way that enhances rather than constrains pedagogy, that evokes confidence and enthusiasm among educators rather than resignation, that challenges and encourages learning rather than inducing widespread anxiety and stress among students.

It appears that this debate remains both ongoing and unresolved. In the conclusion section of the executive summary of the same report, the authors concluded: While Australian educational policies and laws do not explicitly refer to the notion of acting ‘in the best interests of children’ and young people, it would be expected that accountability reforms would address the best interests of children.

We conclude that NAPLAN is not in the best interest of young Australians.

**Cross-country**

Our students had a great day at Springbrook for our annual cross-country conducted in week two. It proved to be a great social event and catch up day for parents and supporters of both schools and I believe our relationship with Springbrook is a wonderful opportunity for both students and parents to interact and develop a great small school bond. While the weather held off and Springbrook won the day our kids rarely ceased enjoying themselves especially some of our student’s younger siblings who made great use of the facilities provided on the day. Thankyou to the Springbrook P&C for their support and equally to our parent contingent who made the trip to cheer on our competitors.
After School Sport
Term two has seen the reintroduction of after school sport. The funding this year is very different and while it provides for coaches, equipment and some staffing it does not provide afternoon tea for our students. In order to ensure our students are catered for each Monday and Wednesday afternoon we have put out a request for parents to provide some home-bake to feed the energetic little tackers. If you can help out it would be greatly appreciated. The kids have really taken to the tennis and are playing every opportunity they can especially our younger students.

ICAS
We commence ICAS testing next week for all students from year three to year six. Digital technologies will be our first one on Tuesday followed by Science on June 3rd; Writing between 15th and 19th of June along with Spelling on Tuesday 16th June. English and mathematics will be completed in July and August. As mentioned in an earlier newsletter this testing gives parents an opportunity to look at their child’s progress along with students from across the country and unlike Naplan parents can view their child’s response to each individual question in all areas via an online parent login facility.

Facilities
Just to update everyone as to what we are having done around the school toward improvement and upgrades to enhance not only operation but the basic aesthetics along with student and staff comfort. During our winter vacation we are having our back stairs from the main building replaced as well as a new surface on the floor in the amenities block. There will be some additional concrete aprons added to the northern side of the building as well as one near our main classroom entry. There will be work done to alleviate the water that flows under the building during heavy rain as a consequence of poor drainage.

Until next time
Have a productive week

Warren

Kokoda Challenge
Our next fundraising event will be the Mini Kokoda and the Kokoda Challenge on 18th July. These two events usually bring in about $3000 dollars for our P&C. It is a combined effort with the Hall Committee and P&C working together. It is an exciting opportunity for the Numimbah Valley community. The Kokoda Challenge organisation is also a very worthy organisation that has a dedicated program aimed at helping our youths.

Money raised by our P&C benefits our school and students in many ways such as, supporting excursions and camps, funding the end of year Christmas Tree, upgrading facilities and many other projects that our P&C are working towards. If you would like to get involved in deciding on projects to be completed and organising our fundraising events, come along to our friendly meetings.

Tuckshop Bake
We would like to welcome all the parents to bake some goodies for the tuckshop. Danielle and her team manage the lunches on the Fridays and they welcome any of the other parents to aid them with baked goodies that they can sell for morning tea. We are in week 4 of this term and there are a good number of Fridays still to come. Please put your hand up to bake once or twice as this would greatly benefit the activities of the tuckshop and the P&C fundraising efforts, not to mention the bellies of our kids. Healthy homemade options are ideal.

Our next meeting is on Friday 12th June starting at 3.30pm. If anyone has any agenda items for discussion please contact me. All community members welcome!

Mashenka
Friday 22nd May is the annual walk safely to school day. Jodie will be meeting students and their parents at the Numinbah Valley Hall and walking to school with them. In order to keep everyone safe we will need parents to accompany Jodie and the students.

**PARENT INTERVIEWS**

Below are the allocated time slots for parent interviews. There will be a hard copy placed in the tuckshop next Monday 18th May.

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That’s why we call it ‘The Present’.”
– Eleanor Roosevelt

Congratulations Ribbon Winners

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<tr>
<th>1st Place</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lorcan</td>
<td>Ashley</td>
<td>Kalan</td>
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<td>Tajska</td>
<td>Eithne</td>
<td>Tyson</td>
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<td>Chloe</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Lara</td>
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<td>Lily</td>
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TUCKSHOP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need help to keep the tuckshop going! We will be creating a roster for the tuckshop serving/baking/cooking, we need committed parents to be part of this roster. There is only 8 weeks a term that the tuckshop runs so if everyone helps out it will only be once or twice per the term. If you are able to help out please see Danielle ASAP.

GARDEN NEWS

Winter is closing in and we have been busy harvesting pumpkins, rosellas and rocket. Check out our photos below of the juniors making pumpkin soup last week!

The students will also be propagating new seeds (kindly donated by Kerry Jack and seedlings donated by Rachael Hardy) and they will be starting their new life in the shade house/classroom.

Jodie

OUR FINISHED PRODUCT

MAKING PUMPKIN SOUP
Do less, not more, for your kids

Michael Grose

With school-aged children we can find ourselves making lunches, getting kids out of bed and cleaning out schoolbags rather than giving these basic tasks of living over to them.

The basic task of parenting, whether you have a two year old or a twenty-two year old, is to work yourself out of a job at the first possible chance.

REDUNDANCY should be the aim of the game! We never become redundant in a relationship sense – the emotional connection between our children and us is never severed.

In a practical, physical way we need to make children less, rather than more, reliant on us.

Developing independence is really about stepping back to allow children in. Doing less rather than more!

We develop greater independence in our kids one job at a time.

We easily take on children’s responsibilities.

It is easy as parents to take on the jobs and responsibilities that really should belong to our children. With toddlers it is so easy to dress, feed and clean up after them rather than give these jobs over to them.

With school-aged children we can find ourselves making lunches, getting kids out of bed and cleaning out schoolbags rather than giving these basic tasks of living over to them.

TIP NO. 1 for developing independence:

Be clear about who owns jobs or tasks in your family and never take on a child’s job, or part of a task, unless there is extenuating circumstances such as illness.

TIP NO. 2 for developing independence:

Never be more worried about a child’s job than they are, otherwise it becomes your job, not theirs.

The school holidays provide a good opportunity to reflect on the whole notion of job-sharing. It’s also a good time for kids to increase their job load when they are not burdened with schoolwork and extra-curricular activities.

Here’s my challenge for you: Think of a job that you regularly do for your child that he or she can do for him or herself. Then step back and enable your child to do that for themselves on a full-time basis. Do less not more for your kids.

If you do that, then you can congratulate yourself as you have moved one step more toward REDUNDANCY.