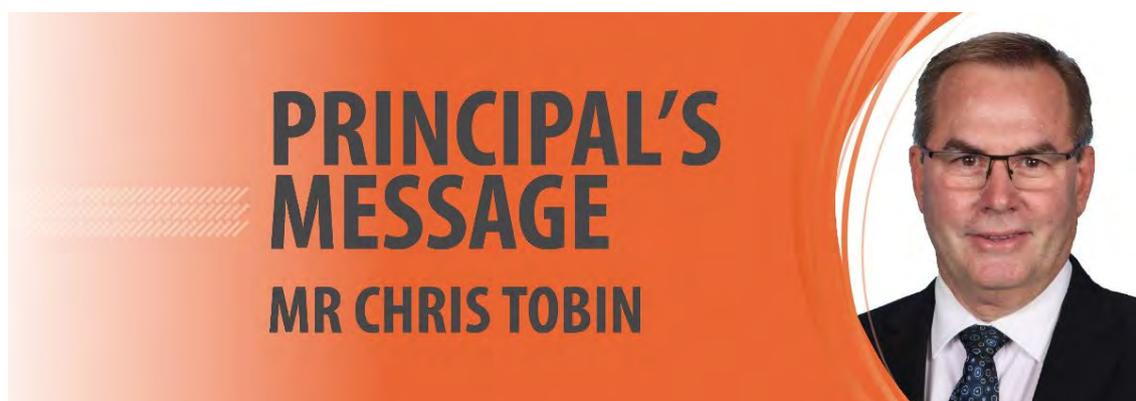


Merrimac State High School | Edition 1 | Friday 5 February

[View this email in your browser](#)**NEWSLETTER | EDITION 1 | FRIDAY 5 FEBRUARY**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I have spent some time this morning at the school's Swimming Carnival and was pleased to see students participating, cheering others on and having fun. As I glance out of my window I see students enjoying the inflatable slide. I appreciate how we can both have fun, work hard and celebrate our successes at Merrimac.

Last year's graduating cohort have been highly successful with the majority of students receiving the required ATAR to grant them entry to higher education. We also have positive feedback from the students joining an apprenticeship, traineeship or the workforce. Additionally, all but four students achieved their QCE from their efforts. All results to be proud of.

This year we have welcomed the largest Year 7 cohort of 246 students that we have seen for many years. They have completed their Orientation Week and are starting to settle into Year 7 life. After speaking with a number of students, they all seem to be enjoying the start of secondary education.

I would like to remind all parents of the bike safety requirements. If your student travels to and from high school by bicycle, please ensure they wear their helmets.

Since my earlier letter this year to parents and carers, we have been provided with further information regarding the school being air-conditioned. Our school will need an electrical upgrade to provide enough energy to power the school's air conditioners. While this will delay the installation program, the upgrade will ensure we can work at full capacity. I have no solid information as to how this will affect the timeline. As I receive further information I will keep parents and students informed.

On Wednesday night, six other staff members and myself attended the Premier's Excellence Awards.

Being recognised as a State Finalist was an outstanding achievement. It was a great reward for all the staff to be recognised for their terrific efforts in supporting students during the Learning at Home period and generally caring for student wellbeing. I am very proud of the staff's great work. Their award was very much appreciated.

**Regards,  
Chris Tobin  
Principal**

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**FROM THE DEPUTY'S DESK**  
**SUSAN BELL**

Welcome to the 2021 academic year, I hope the holiday break allowed your student to refresh and recharge their “batteries”; ready for active engagement in this term’s school work. Our school and our policies are based around 3 very important values – respect, responsibility and reliability and it is the upholding of these values by both students and staff that makes Merrimac SHS such a great school.

I would like to offer a warm welcome to all those students who are new to Merrimac SHS, especially our Year 7 students. It was wonderful to see so many excited Year 7 students on the first day of school, proudly wearing their new school uniforms. In the first week, there was less of a focus on academic learning, and a much greater focus on getting to know their teachers and fellow classmates as well as becoming familiar with procedures and surroundings. The team building day on Friday allowed many Year 7 students to forge new friendships as well as challenge themselves.

This is an exciting year for our students both inside and outside the classroom. Whilst academic performance is paramount, there are also many opportunities for students to further their social, sporting, cultural and leadership development. Students need to take advantage of the many extra curricular activities offered by the school. It is often their involvement in these activities that makes their school life memorable.

On Friday 5 February, we will be holding our school swimming carnival. This is our students first opportunity for the year to help build points for their house. Students wear house colours on the day and there are lots of novelty events to allow all students opportunities to support their house. The final highlight of the day is the student versus teachers relay race – an event not to be missed!

To achieve their potential, all of our students need to take responsibility for their learning. As well as bringing all the necessary equipment, laptop and books to each lesson, this entails attending timetabled lessons, actively participating in those lessons, completing homework, completing both drafts and assignments and submitting them on time as well as sitting all scheduled tests.

Our school uniform helps with school identity and every student is expected to wear the appropriate Merrimac SHS uniform. Our uniform policy is clearly articulated in the Parent Handbook and student diary. Of particular note, the uniform policy allows for one plain stud or sleeper to be worn in the earlobes. No other piercings, clear, covered or otherwise are permitted.

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school. It is much better to address concerns or problems when they first occur rather than wait and have the issue snowball into a major concern,

**Susan Bell**  
**Deputy Principal**

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## LEADERSHIP & WELLBEING

### DAHNA WOODS

#### Character Matters

As we return to embark on a new school year, we welcome new students and their families to our school community; a community where **Merrimac Minds Matter**. Our focus continues to be around the promotion, prevention and early intervention of mental health in our students as well as building resilience and tenacity through a focus on student character.

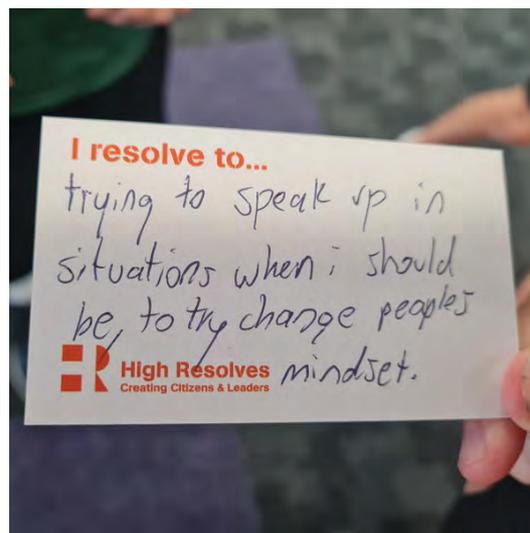
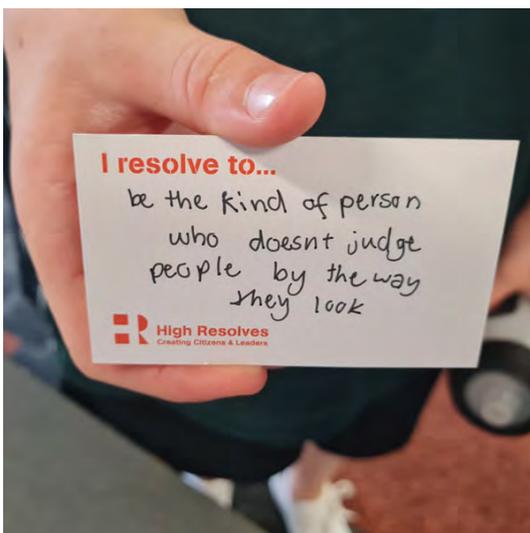
This year we are excited to introduce a Leadership Development Skills lesson running during MMM time.

This lesson aims to provide unique opportunities for students to develop leadership capabilities while participating in a range of activities. We hope to better equip students with the capabilities to shape our school culture building pride, as well as building personal capabilities for the world of work. Students participating will be able to;

- Recognise and understand leadership qualities and characteristics.
- Interact with guest speakers (internal and external) to discuss effective leadership.
- Develop collaborative skills (working in teams)
- Reflect on individual character to find opportunity for personal growth.
- Improve public speaking and interview skills.
- Create community partnerships.

This opportunity is available to all year levels and students who wish to participate in this program are asked to apply through their year level Dean. All students are also encouraged to attend Student Representative Council Meeting each week at 11.30am in B1, we look forward to seeing you there.

To introduce the Year 7 cohort to our Merrimac Minds Program, all students have participated in our High Resolves Workshop. With a focus on identity and purpose, students are challenged to break stereotypes and create a vision for how they want the future to be and identify how their personal actions can help make their vision a reality. At the end of the session, students were asked to write what they resolve to do. Looking at some of the images taken from the session, it's great to see what our young people resolve to do and it's clear that character matters to our students too.



**Dahna Woods**  
HOD Leadership & Wellbeing

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**JUNIOR SECONDARY**  
**CHRIS WOOD**

Welcome back to all the students and families for another exciting year of student learning and growth at Merrimac SHS. A big thanks to all of our parents and carers who have supported our school, by ensuring their children were in full uniform, attending every day and being positive members of our school community.

I had the pleasure to meet all the year 7 students and parent on the first day which The Year 7 students had a fantastic first week at high school that focused on building positive relationships with fellow classmates and their teachers and getting to know the layout of the school grounds.



It is very important that each student needs to have a functioning laptop (BYOD Program) that is to be brought to school each day as part of our requirement that students are equipped and prepared for lessons. I also wanted to remind parents and students about the school uniform policy and in particular, student make-up. Visible make-up, eyelash extensions, false fingernails or coloured nail polish is not permitted, only clear nail polish is allowed.

With the school year just starting it is highly beneficial to set up a good structures that can really help your children get back in the swing of things. Dr Stapleton who is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Bond University has some top tips for getting back into school life.

- Routine is key: establish bedtime and sleep patterns early
- Get students to set their own goals for the year
- Minimise or regulate digital devices and social media usage
- Lead by example: if you want children off their phones, get off your own
- Communicate with your children about change, listen to them
- Focus on your child's strengths
- Don't stress- stay calm and show your children how to be calm

I look forward to working with families in the junior school in the year ahead.

**Chris Wood**  
**HOD Junior Secondary**

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## **SENIOR SECONDARY**

### **ANDREW JENNER**

Merrimac State High School is a school that wants to see every student achieving their potential. 2020 saw our senior students make incredible achievements, including almost every single graduating student leaving with their Queensland Certificate of Education and multiple students receiving scholarships to their university of choice. We also had over 50 Year 12 students completing school-based apprenticeships or traineeships and many others completing Vocational Education and Training qualifications, getting them a head start on their chosen career path.

In 2021, to assist our senior students with their time management skills, we have developed an assessment calendar that students can use to plan their time wisely. This will be emailed to all senior students and their families in the coming weeks. We encourage our students to discuss their due dates with their families, as the stress that comes from assessment time often doesn't just affect the students.

Also to assist our senior students, one of the most important policy documents that the school has developed for students is the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) policy. You can find this policy in the [Senior Secondary Curriculum](#) section of the school website. This policy outlines the processes families need to take in order to make sure that their student has fair access to assessment. The policy also explains what to do if a student is unwell during assessment time.

As part of students' enrolment in a Queensland state school, they have access to a suite of Microsoft Office software. One of the awesome benefits of this is the fact that students are able to use OneDrive and the online version of each program. Using OneDrive to store all work prevents issues arising from lost/broken laptops and provides the opportunity to work across multiple devices. It is also super easy for students to share their work with their teachers.

The main goal for all of our students is to graduate high school successfully and become contributing members of society. For information on the Queensland Certificate of Education and pathways information, please check out the [My QCE Website](#).

Wishing all of our senior students success with their studies this year and into the future.

**Andrew Jenner**  
**HOD Senior Secondary**

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## **SWIMMING CARNIVAL 2021**

### **HIGHLIGHTS**



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**UPCOMING EVENTS**  
**SAVE THE DATE**

## Dance Troupe Auditions

### Tuesday 9 & Thursday 11 February

Open auditions for our Merrimac competitive dance team will take place in Week 3.

Juniors: Tuesday 9 February, 7.45am  
Seniors: Thursday 11 February, 7.45am  
Auditions take place in T Block.

For any queries, please contact Miss Kite or Miss Deck.



## Year 12 Induction

### Wednesday 3 March

One of the highlights on the school calendar: the new Senior Cohort become inducted as leaders of the school.



## School Photo Day

### Thursday 4 March

In the coming weeks, students will receive their personalised order envelope for School Photo Day.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)



## Year 7 2022 Enrolment Information Evening Wednesday 10 March

Merrimac is thrilled to welcome prospective Year 7 students and families to the school next month. Find out all about our Selective Entry Program, extensive school facilities and curriculum.



## Twilight Tunes Tuesday 30 March

Merrimac's annual Twilight Tunes day features a day of instrumental music workshops, culminating in a combined schools performance event.



# NOTICES

## Dunlop Court Footbridge Council Works February - April

The City of Gold Coast are currently conducting refurbishment works to the Dunlop Court Footbridge, which are due to finish in April. During this time, the bridge will be closed for approximately four weeks, and a detour will be required. Please refer to the map for the detour route.

The works are taking place from Monday to Friday, 7am - 5pm.



## Deadly Choices Basketball Competition Sunday 21 March

Deadly Choices and Kalwun are hosting a one-time-only Basketball Competition featuring 10 minutes games, a dunking competition, a half-court shot competition and more.

Register by Monday 15 March to book your place. Details below.



SUNDAY 21 MARCH 2021, 8am-1.30pm

Gold Coast Sports and Leisure Centre  
(296 Nerang Broadbeach Rd, Carrara)

- 5 PLAYERS PER TEAM (3 INDIGENOUS PLAYERS & 2 NON-INDIGENOUS OPTIONAL)
- DC AMBASSADORS
- DUNKING COMPETITION
- 10 MINUTE GAMES
- HALF-COURT SHOT COMPETITION & 3 POINT COMPETITION (PRIZES TO BE WON)
- JUMPING CASTLE FOR KIDS
- 3 AGE DIVISIONS: 12-13 YEARS, 14-16 YEARS AND 17-OPENS

Registrations are essential to book your place.  
Register by Monday 15 March to [cianni.roberts@kalwun.com.au](mailto:cianni.roberts@kalwun.com.au)  
Teams to arrive at 8am sharp for a 8.30am start. Teams to supply uniforms.

This event is alcohol, smoke and sugar free.

*Respect Responsibility Reliability*



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