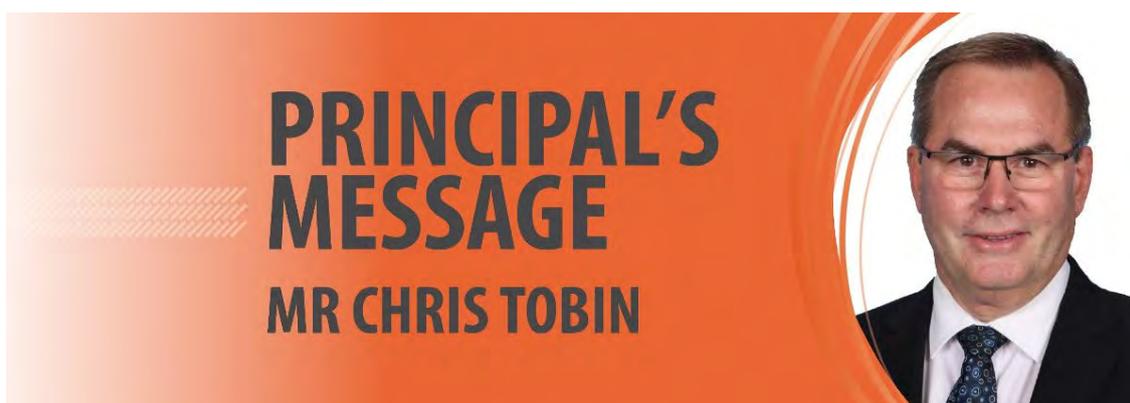


Merrimac State High School | Edition 3 | Monday 31 MAY

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NEWSLETTER | EDITION 3 | MONDAY 31 MAY



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Last week we had a very productive meeting with officers from the Gold Coast City Council and our local Councillor Pauline Young. Our focus was to investigate what could be done to reduce the after school traffic congestion. Central to our discussions was the provision of a time designated pick up area away from the bus zone. Council officers have a number of options to consider before recommending both short and long term solutions. We keenly await to receive their recommendations.

This week construction work will commence with the installation of a safety barrier fencing around a number of buildings. This work is in preparation for the installation of our solar energy system. This system will produce 250kw of energy which is equivalent to between 25 – 30 household solar units. This solar produced electricity will assist the decrease use of grid based electricity once our school is air conditioned. Our air conditioning installation and electrical upgrade is planned to commence during the June/July school holidays. We are waiting to be informed as to the appointed contractor. I know both students and staff are looking forward to an air conditioned summer.

My thanks to the vast majority of parents who strongly support our school values. Winter time necessitates the wearing of warmer clothes. The great majority of students are wearing the correct jumpers and

jackets. Thank you for your support.

I would also call on your same support in relation to skateboards. Skateboards are prohibited within the school grounds. Unfortunately, we have seen too many injuries to deem them an acceptable risk.

Finally, we have had strong support for the presentation from Adair Donaldson, 6.30pm Tuesday 8 June, 2021. As you will recall I have directly emailed all families explaining the importance of the night. I look forward to seeing you next Tuesday night.

Parent Information Evening
Consent and the Law
 The law and legal consequences for online behaviours, consent, mobile phones and underage parties.
 Guest Speaker
Adair Donaldson
 (LLM LLB BBus, Director, Donaldson Law)
 Creator of the acclaimed preventative law resource 'Putting Youth in the Picture' and more recent, *Fall Out Resource*.
 This is a valuable information session not to miss.
Tuesday 8th June - 6:30 to 8pm - School Hall
Registration for this event is essential

Please follow the links provided to register

Regards,
Chris Tobin
Principal

FROM THE DEPUTY'S DESK

JASON GIBBS

It is great to see the consolidated learning happening in lessons during my weekly classroom visits and it is still clear there is no substitute for the face to face student-teacher relationship and its positive effect on individual achievement.

With three weeks left of Term Two we begin an important assessment phase for students across all year levels leading into the completion of Semester One.

Assessments are only difficult if you are unprepared. Use this time productively and consider the following ways to revise to set yourself up for success.

1. Spaced Practice – Break your study into manageable chunks and plan your time to review work regularly.
2. Retrieval Practice – Practice retrieving information after a period of distraction. Using cues like flash cards may help.
3. Elaboration – Associate new learning with existing knowledge.
4. Dual Coding – Present information in multiple forms ie words and pictures.
5. Concrete Examples – Use real world examples of ideas associated to the new learning.

Having time means you don't have to rush and cram revision into a single session. Having time means you don't need to stress.

Time is the secret. Use it wisely.

Jason Gibbs
Deputy Principal

FROM THE DEPUTY'S DESK

MONICA WRIGHT

Inclusion Professional Development

Diversity is respected and embraced at Merrimac State High School. We invest in professional development for staff so that we can tailor our practices to meet the needs of students of all abilities, their families and the wider community.

STRIVE – Robust Vocabulary

Did you know that you must understand 92% of the words in a sentence for you to comprehend it overall? Recently our Special Education teachers have been engaging in Robust Vocabulary workshops with our Speech Language Pathologist, Kate Pillay. Teachers have been learning how to teach vocabulary in the context of the books, magazines and multimedia students are reading and viewing,



to significantly improve reading comprehension. It's brilliant to see the word walls developing in classrooms and hear the conversations about tier 2 words.

Proloquo2Go - Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Parents, therapists, teachers and users around the world recognise *Proloquo2Go* as the gold standard in AAC solutions. The app is used by people with Autism, Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy. Our Inclusion team has been learning, alongside our speech language pathologist, that the key purpose of *Proloquo2Go* is to be the voice of individuals who may not be able to express themselves verbally. The app uses visual and symbol support, allowing young people with Autism, Down Syndrome or Cerebral Palsy to form sentences at the touch of a few buttons which they can choose to have spoken out loud or simply displayed on screen.

Assistive Technology

In the education context, Assistive Technology is used to support access to learning, engagement and achievement for a range of students with diverse learning needs. Our dedicated Inclusive Team, English, Mathematics, Social Science and Science Faculties all participated in an Assistive Technology Workshops to learn Office 365 and Windows 10 technology features to support student access to learning. To support students with disabilities, and specific learning disorders in reading, writing and mathematics (Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and Dyscalculia) teachers learnt how use Speech to text, voice recording, text to speech and MS Edge features. The intention of the training is to ensure that staff are confident and able to explicitly teach students how to use the assistive technology to cater for their specific learning needs.

Upcoming SPELD Parent Workshop

Executive Functions: What are they? Why are they important?

Date: Wednesday, 23 June 2021

Time: 1.5 hours; 3:15-4:45pm

Location: Merrimac State High School Library

Executive Functions are skills we use every day to learn, work and manage daily life. When students have difficulty with Executive Functions, aspects of learning and school life become a challenge. In this workshop, you will learn what Executive Functions are, how to identify these challenges and how to help your child.

Executive Function is responsible for many skills, including:

- Paying attention
- Organizing, planning, and prioritizing
- Starting tasks and staying focused on them to completion
- Understanding different points of view
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring (keeping track of what you're doing)

We look forward to seeing you at this presentation. Please RSVP to Marian Davis Ph. 5595-8621 or email: mdavi450@eq.edu.au by Monday 21 June 2021.

Upcoming Whole Staff Autism Queensland Workshop:

- What is autism?
- Practical strategies for supporting students on the Autism Spectrum in a secondary setting
- Emotional regulation and behaviour de-escalation
- Executive functioning for Secondary students

Monica Wright
Deputy Principal Inclusion

SENIOR SECONDARY

ANDREW JENNER

Pathways Forward

As we move through Term Two, students in their senior phase of learning begin to solidify their pathways forward, as they reflect on the journey so far. At Merrimac State High School, students in Year 10 create their Senior Education and Training (SET) Plan to provide the school with valuable information used to assist in guiding students forward. The SET Plan process is an integral component of the subject selection process in Year 10.

In Year 11 and 12, students will be reflecting on their results and journey so far, as part of the SET Plan review process. It is an important process, as students need to be able to gauge their progress towards their goals.

My Future

A resource available to all students to assist in their goal setting and personal development is the MyFuture website. MyFuture:

- Provides tools to assist with career planning, career pathways and work transitions
- Delivers unbiased, high quality resources curated by career experts and professionals
- Ensures student data and information are securely protected
- Allows students to retain their personalised accounts after leaving school

Students should head to - <https://myfuture.edu.au/> - and sign up for a free account, using their school email address.

My QCE

Another valuable resource for our senior students is the myQCE website

<https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au/>. The student portal of the myQCE website is where students access their learning accounts and is where students will download their QCE, once it has been successfully achieved at the end of Year 12. The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) provide

students with access to the myQCE Student Portal, using their Learner Unique Identifier (LUI), which is available on Year 11 & 12 student ID Cards. The initial password is a 4 digit pin of the student's date of birth in ddmm format.

If you have any questions, contact Mr Jenner – ajenn54@eq.edu.au

Andrew Jenner
HOD Senior Secondary

MATHEMATICS

PAUL GRAY

At Merrimac SHS, in conjunction with other faculties here on campus, we have placed an emphasis on STEAM education. The skills learnt in Mathematics are fundamental in so many of today's emerging industries and when used in conjunction with skills in Science, the Arts and Technology we believe we are developing students potential to lead the way in the future. In 2019, we were recognised as having the best program in Queensland with the converted Showcase Award. So why is STEAM so important?

In today's world, setting students up for future success means exposing them to these disciplines holistically in order to develop their critical thinking skills.

"Education is under pressure to respond to a changing world," education writer Jeevan Vasagar asserts in [a Financial Times article](#). "As repetitive tasks are eroded by technology and outsourcing, the ability to solve novel problems has become increasingly vital."

The earlier students are exposed to the STEAM disciplines, the better. In [a study by Microsoft](#), 4 in 5 STEM college students (78%) said they decided to study STEM in high school or earlier, and one in five (21%) decided in middle years of school or earlier. Yet, only 1 in 5 STEM college students feel that their K-12 education prepared them extremely well for their college courses in STEM. There also appears to be a major disparity in the [female to male ratio](#) when it comes to those employed in STEM fields. Getting more girls interested in STEAM disciplines is another facet of the movement. We are very proud that the girls outnumber the boys in our STEAM projects. This is a great strength at Merrimac SHS.

Not only does a STEAM framework teach students how to think critically, problem solve and use creativity, it prepares students to work in fields that are poised for growth. A report from the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) projects growth in STEM and STEAM-related occupations of 8% between now and 2029, compared to 3.4% for non-STEM occupations. It also lists median annual wages of \$86,980 for STEM/STEAM jobs, compared to \$39,810 for all occupations.

Even for students who don't choose a career in one of the STEM/STEAM fields, the skills students gain from a STEAM education can be translated into almost any career.

"Educating students in STEM subjects prepares students for life, regardless of the profession they choose to follow," technology innovator and President of Enterra Solutions Stephen F. DeAngelis says in [an article in Wired](#). "Those subjects teach students how to think critically and how to solve problems — skills that can be used throughout life to help them get through tough times and take advantage of opportunities whenever they appear."

An important part of this educational approach is that students who are taught under a STEAM framework are not just taught the subject matter but they are taught how to learn, how to ask questions, how to experiment and how to create. We are very proud to be offering an outstanding STEAM experience to all students at Merrimac SHS.

Paul Gray
HOD Mathematics

LANGUAGES & INTERNATIONAL JO FILMER

Our junior language classes are busy developing our language skills and cultural knowledge through a variety of class activities and cultural events.

Our language lessons are filled with fun activities to enhance learning experiences like storytelling and creating. Year 7 and 8 Chinese classes will present Chinese story books at the end of Semester One. Students also use interactive online learning tools to preview, practice and revise work to maximise their learning outcomes. Mrs Jackson moved her Year 10 Spanish class to the kitchen for the unit on Spanish culture and food. The class looked at recipes and commands in Spanish and used an Argentinian recipe to make a desert called Alfajores, pronounced (al-pha-HOR-res). They were delicious! The students really enjoyed it. In Japanese, students have been learning about the upcoming Olympics in Japan and learning vocab to talk about different sports and how to speak/read dates of events. They are now going to be creating profiles of their chosen Olympian for their assessment task this term. Outside of the classroom, we had Chinese New Year celebration in February. Students had the opportunity to appreciate an amazing Chinese musical instrument performance called "Erhu" and engage in Kong Fu practice with our humorous Kong Fu instructor from CIQ.



Spanish Day was another success in May. Year 8, 9,10 students had the opportunity to interact with Spanish speakers who came to Merrimac SHS to cook Spanish food and to play Spanish music and flamenco dance. During 1st break the entire school had the opportunity to try 'Paella' and 'Croquetas' from The Lawn, as well as Spanish food from the canteen and to enjoy a fantastic flamenco performance. It was a spectacular sunny day on the Gold Coast and it was amazing to see students and staff learning about Spanish culture.

Lu Wang
LOTE Coordinator

UPCOMING EVENTS SAVE THE DATE

2021 Multicultural Night

Thursday 17 June

"The Amazing Race"

5.00pm - 8.00pm School Hall

Tickets available now from the School but are limited due to Covid19 restrictions. Grab yours now so you don't miss out.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

MERRIMAC STATE HIGH SCHOOL
PRESENTS

**THE AMAZING
RACE**

MULTICULTURAL NIGHT

Thursday 17 June
5.30pm - 8.00pm

Tickets available now through the Finance Window and at stalls set up by SRC during break times outside the canteen.

[Keep updated on event information on our Facebook page](#)

NOTICES

2021 Queensland Engagement and Wellbeing Survey

Later this term, students will be asked to take part in the Queensland Engagement and Wellbeing (QEW) Survey.

We know that wellbeing and engagement are important parts of your child's life at school. The department and our school are looking at ways to collect information on these important areas so we can support our students in the best way possible.

The QEW Survey is designed to measure how state school students view their wellbeing and engagement. Results from this survey will tell us about students' levels of wellbeing and engagement. This information will allow us to better support our students and meet their needs.

In 2021, the QEW Survey will take place between these dates:

Term Two
Monday 31 May to Friday 25 June, 2021

An information letter will be sent out to parents and carers closer to the time. If you have any questions, please contact Dahna Woods dwood236@eq.edu.au.

QLD Health Dental Van will be located at **Broadbeach State School** from **Wednesday 09 June**.

To arrange an appointment for your child please telephone the Oral Health Client Service Centre on 1300 300 850 Monday – Wednesday 8.00 am – 3.30 pm excluding Public Holidays.

Patients who have not booked in and still wish to be seen may book in at this school. (during the June holidays would suit students).



Respect Responsibility Reliability



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Forward



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CRICOS Code 00608A

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office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au

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