DEAR PARENTS

Welcome back to the start of Semester 2. We have had a busy start to the Semester with all classes underway and learning in full swing. We have also seen the Year 10 students participate in the “Love Bites” program that deals with family relationships. This powerful program assists students with a range of skills.

We also had 15 students participate in the prestigious Creative Generations program. This outstanding program provided a professional environment to challenge and reward our singers and dancers. It was a pleasure to be in the audience and see so many students rewarded for their efforts.

I have also changed some of the ways I operate at school. I am committing to spending two days a week in classrooms working with teachers and students. Last week I was able to spend time with nearly all the Year 7 classes and a number of the Senior Maths classes.

MORE ON PAGE 2
PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

Now that Semester 2 has commenced, I encourage all students, and particularly our Year 12s, to make productive use of their time both at school and home to ensure the best results possible. The year is racing past and our Year 12 students only have 16 weeks left of academic time before moving onto the next stage in their lives! All students are given homework on a regular basis. If you are unsure about homework or revision requirements, please discuss this with classroom teachers.

On Friday 17 July, I was fortunate to attend the Queensland Training Awards 2015 – Regional Finals ceremony held at Mantra Surfers Paradise. One of our very talented Year 12 students, Shauna Van Meygaarden, was recognised for her outstanding progress in working towards attaining her Certificate III in Children’s Services through a school-based traineeship. Shauna has been working with Evocca College and Smarter Kids Robina to attain this Certificate. Well done Shauna!

Another three students that need recognition are Calla Adams, Chloe Bond and Glen Sammut. These students devoted their school holidays to work with the Bangarra Dance Troupe to produce an amazing dance spectacular that was showcased as part of the Creative Generation performance in Brisbane. A huge thank you must also go to Sue Taylor, our Indigenous Support Officer, who gave up her school holidays to help these students take part in rehearsals.

The school also had a large number of singers and dancers take part in Creative Generation. Well done to those students! These students’ performances were also spectacular. A huge thank you to the staff who supported them – Emily Kite, Christine Deck and Hadeed Pourshafighi. I know that hours and hours of work went into rehearsals and the students certainly did the school proud.

School communication and feedback are the main feature of the next couple of weeks. We had parent teacher interviews on Tuesday 21 July, which allowed parents to meet with teachers to understand how best they might support their students at home to ensure they achieve the best possible academic outcomes. Along with this, some parents and students have been selected to take part in the School Opinion Survey. This opportunity allows those students and parents who have been selected to give feedback and help shape future directions at Merrimac State High School.

Finally, I would strongly recommend you attend this year’s school musical “13”. The musical will be presented in the school hall on Friday 31 July and Saturday 1 August. Tickets are on sale from the school cashier window. I look forward to seeing you at this great event.

Chris Tobin
Principal

CASHIER WINDOW OPENING HOURS

From the beginning of 2016, the school cashier window will be closed on Mondays. It will operate 8.00am to 1.45pm from Tuesday to Friday.

Creative Generations

On July 17 and 18, a number of our students took their love of dance to the big stage as performers in the eleventh annual Creative Generation performance in Brisbane.

These students were selected from among the best young dancers from Queensland state schools and performed in front of an audience of thousands in a dazzling display of costumes and special effects.

We are proud of all of our students who were accepted into Creative Generation but a special mention must go to Lilly Jerret, who performed as one of the top 20 elite dancers for the feature group, and Georgia Taylor, who was part of the second group of feature dancers – this is an outstanding achievement for both these girls!

Congratulations to all our amazing singers and dancers!
In Semester 2, students from Years 7, 8 and 9 will be involved in our Student Wellbeing Program. These weekly lessons are designed from the MindMatters National Framework that aims to promote mental health, prevent problems by engaging early intervention and encourage secondary schools and families to work more closely together.

Junior Secondary assemblies will also be in full swing during the Semester. This will give us another avenue to reinforce school expectations, celebrate students’ successes both at school and in the community and showcase our students’ abilities with performances.

Just before the holidays Year 5 and 6 students engaged in our Early Flyers Program with a full day of workshops that focused on our Summit Excellence Programs of academic, sport and dance. The program gave the students an insight into what our high school looks, feels and sounds like during a normal school day. The students’ work was of a very high quality and there conduct was a credit to their primary schools and families.

Chris Wood
HOD Junior Secondary

Memoirs Come Alive in English!

Year 9 English students recently studied an engaging unit on Australian Representations and Personal Memoirs. As part of the unit students composed a memoir based on a childhood memory of an older family or community member. Students willingly asked family friends, coaches, grandparents and even teachers at Merrimac State High School. In Mrs Braithwaite’s 9B Sports Summit English class, students excelled in this assessment task and thoroughly enjoyed the experience of interviewing their chosen person and constructing a piece of writing using appropriate language features taught in class. Year 9B students Andrew Hunt, Imogen Corfield, Tahlia Ralph and Josh Young used very creative design and layout to present their memoirs on paper with meaningful photographs and subtle touches to bring back memories from older times and places. Well done to these students! We look forward to publishing their personal memoirs in the school magazine later in the year.

Just a reminder that the Rockin’ Reading sessions will continue in Term 3 with slight changes from the afternoon sessions to early morning sessions on Wednesday for Year 8 and Thursday for Year 7 starting in Week 2. Mrs Neilson (HOD Reading) and talented English teachers Mr Airey and Miss Warren will be involved in this program, so come along and get involved! Enjoy some delicious breakfast snacks and extend your mind with reading and creative thinking skills with enthusiastic educators. Read to learn – learn to think!

If you would like to know more about Rockin’ Reading and other writing clubs offered within the English faculty please visit the friendly teachers in O block or contact the HOD English on kwils189@eq.edu.au or 55968 666.

Happy reading!

Kylie Wilson
HOD English
2015 School Opinion Surveys

Each year the school and Education Queensland seeks feedback from students, staff and parents. This feedback informs us on our programs and teaching and also assists us in future planning.

This week, all parents and caregivers have been mailed information and a link to the online survey. We look forward to your feedback. Similarly, staff are also completing surveys and next Wednesday 29 July, 60 randomly selected Year 8 students (per 6), and 60 Year 11 students (per 3) will be completing the online student survey. This survey will take place during assembly time to ensure class disruption does not occur. The Deputy Principals will assist the students complete the survey. Students need to bring their laptops fully charged on Wednesday in particular.

Please ensure your surveys have been completed by Friday 31 July 2015. Thank you for helping us to ensure our students continue to receive the best outcomes and learning experiences at Merrimac State High School.

SEP

Excursion for students in Cert I Work Preparation and Cert II Workplace Practices

At the end of last term, the students completing their Certificate II in Workplace Practices and Certificate I in Work Preparation (community) participated in an educational excursion to a number of workplaces and organisations. This gave them the opportunity to follow up with the units of work they had completed and practically apply their knowledge. There was an emphasis on work safety and the variety of jobs available in different industries. Feedback from students was positive and they found it a valuable learning experience which will prepare them for work.

Rani Hancock competing in Los Angeles

Following her success at the Special Olympics in Melbourne last year, Rani Hancock is going to Los Angeles to compete in athletics in the Special Olympics over the next two weeks. We wish her luck with her races and all the best for an enjoyable trip.

Heike Orlow
HOD SEP

From the INDUSTRY LIAISON OFFICER’S DESK

CareerMe App now available through iTunes and Android

CareerMe is a career exploration tool designed to provide career specific information at the swipe of a button. The easy to use menu allows searching by industry for the occupation of the job seeker’s choice. Find out the average wage, number of workers currently employed in Australia and the educational requirements of an occupation. The app even allows searching for vacancies or training providers in your area. Visit the CareerMe website for further information, or download the free app for iPhone or Android now.

K Hirini and H Holloway for commencement of hospitality school based traineeships. H Marston for commencement of a school based business traineeship with City Beach. E Vetenibua for commencement of a chef school-based apprenticeship with Moo Moos Restaurant Broadbeach.


Other

Apprenticeships Info - 1800 210 210
Rachel Skrabanich – Industry Liaison Officer – rskra1@eq.edu.au

Rachel Skrabanich
Industry Liaison Officer
NOTICE BOARD

Stay informed about what’s happening around our school

Student Service REMINDERS

If you child is absent (e.g. due to illness) you can notify the school by:
- Replying to the Absence Text (preferred method)
- Emailing absences@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au (preferred method)
- Sending a note when the student returns to school
- Send notification through QParent App
- Calling the office

If you are planning for your child to be absent for more than three days e.g. medical procedure, holidays etc;
- Obtain an ‘Application for Student Leave’ form from admin office, complete all details and return to office
- Student to take a ‘Student on Approved Leave – Subject Tasks’ form to his/her teachers for work while they are away
- If this form is not completed and/or not returned you will continue to receive the daily absence text and your child will be marked as ‘Unexplained Absence’. Please be aware that holidays taken during term time may not receive the approval of the school

A reminder that under Queensland law, you must ensure your teenager of school age (up to 17 years of age) is enrolled and attends school all day, every school day, unless they have an acceptable reason.

Acceptable reasons would not include:
- Birthdays
- Shopping
- Visiting family and friends
- Minor medical or dental check-ups
- Family holidays

If changing details e.g. address details, phone numbers, emergency contacts etc;
- Send notification through QParent App
- Provide new details in writing to the school office or request your student to collect a ‘pink’ Student Card – Confidential form from the office

PISA TESTING 2015

On Tuesday 04 August, 30 randomly selected students and 20 staff will provide valuable information to the 2015 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) main study. This program provides valuable information on educational policy and allows us to compare the performance of our education system with those overseas. In 2015, Australia will be one of over 70 countries participating in PISA and around 15,000 students will be involved.

Next week letters and information will go home to the families of the 30 randomly selected Merrimac State High School students. The students will sit the testing in the computer laboratory in E3 and be supervised by Deputy Principal Mr Neil Steinhardt.

Students will receive a Certificate of Participation and two small gifts. Students will also receive feedback on their performance in PISA in the form of an individual report.

Thank you for your involvement and to find out more about PISA go to: www.acer.edu.au/ozpisa

Canteen News

Thank you so much to our wonderful student council for supplying the Canteen with assorted herbs for our herb garden. They are thriving at the moment and will add a bit of class to our food prep and cooking.

Maryanne Cherry
Canteen Manager
2015 TERM 3 SENIOR  TUTORIAL  PROGRAM

Tutorials are combined for Year 11 & 12 Authority subjects. Students MUST sign the attendance roll each week and it is an expectation that all OP eligible students attend tutorials – especially Masterclass each Monday (5 per term).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>TEACHER</th>
<th>ROOM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.00 – 9.00am</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Mr Cruz / Mr Watts</td>
<td>N7</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00 – 10.00</td>
<td>Legal Studies (Yr 11 ONLY)</td>
<td>Mrs Briffa</td>
<td>F2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00-11.00 am</td>
<td>MASTERCLASSES</td>
<td>Mr Gibbs</td>
<td>Library P3</td>
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<td>(Compulsory for ALL OP and SR students)</td>
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<td>11.00-12.00 pm</td>
<td>Health Education</td>
<td>Mr Joseph</td>
<td>J1</td>
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<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Mr Eisenhuth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ENL English (second language students)</td>
<td>Ms Wilson</td>
<td>O3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Math A</td>
<td>Mr Strong</td>
<td>M7</td>
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<td>Math B</td>
<td>Mr Anstey</td>
<td>M9</td>
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<td>Math C</td>
<td>Mrs Ly</td>
<td>M8</td>
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<td>12.20-1.20 pm</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Ms Dixon</td>
<td>B3</td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Mrs Wang</td>
<td>B4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Mrs Dillon</td>
<td>M3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Year 12 English</td>
<td>Ms Wilson</td>
<td>O3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.00-3.00 pm</td>
<td>Year 11 English</td>
<td>Ms Biltoft</td>
<td>O8</td>
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<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Mr Thompson</td>
<td>M8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.15-4.15pm</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Mr Pourshafighi</td>
<td>J2</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Mr Watts</td>
<td>L3</td>
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<td>3.15 – 4.15pm</td>
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<td>Day</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>THURSDAY</td>
<td>3.15-5.00pm</td>
<td>Year 11 Visual Art</td>
<td>Ms Bemet</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>3.15 – 5.00pm</td>
<td>Year 12 Visual Art</td>
<td>Mrs McMenamin</td>
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