DEAR PARENTS

Last Wednesday the school held a moving Remembrance Day ceremony for all students and staff. The school assembled on the lawn area at the front of the Administration block. We are very privileged to have a “Lone Pine Tree” taken from a cutting of the Lone Pines at Gallipoli as the focus of this lawn area of the school. Our 2016 school leaders conducted a solemn and respectful ceremony.

This is the final week for Year 12 with students finalising subject commitments and completing certificate requirements. The Year 12 Graduation ceremony and Formal are great opportunities to celebrate their 12 years of schooling.

Congratulations go to Gemma Bowie, who was given the highest academic accolade of our school, Dux for 2015. Well done Gemma! We wish you every success in your future studies.

The 2015 school leadership team was also announced with 21 dynamic and resilient students, committed to making a difference, elected to lead the student body next year. It can be confidently expected that these students will rise to the challenge and take their role very seriously as school leaders in 2016. They will be led by our 2016 School Captains, Yasmin Lemon, Cebile Mpofu, Richard Ngawati and Montana Zilfleisch.

INTERVENTION

This year was very special as for the first time we celebrated the achievements of our Junior and Senior Secondary students across two nights. It was wonderful to see so many parents and families in attendance. The night highlighted the successes of our students, the opportunities they have had and the rewards they have attained through hard work and determination. Highlighted were the 58 students who have already gained guaranteed entry to higher education and the high number of Year 12 students who have achieved VHAs in their subjects. Just these two pieces of data emphasise what can be achieved when great teachers and dedicated students work together in an environment of respect, responsibility and reliability.

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PRESENTATION NIGHTS

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IMPORTANT DATES

YEAR 12 FORMAL
20 NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER

18 Nov Year 12 Graduation
20 Nov Year 12 Formal
23 - 27 Nov Year 10 & 11 Exams
26 Nov Year 11 Fancy Dress Cruise
26 Nov Year 10 Formal
27 Nov Year 10 & Year 11 Last Day
03 Dec Merrimac in Action Day
PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

My congratulations to an outstanding year group for both their school spirit and achievements. We now turn to our Year 11 and 10 students and wish them the best for their final 2015 exams. We look forward to their leadership in 2016.

Chris Tobin
Principal

DEPUTY’S DESK

Susan Bell
Deputy Principal

It has been a very busy term particularly with our Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary Presentation Nights as well as our Sports Awards evening held across Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings in the first week in November. These celebrations of our students’ successes across a wide range of areas including academic, cultural, attendance and community service was a very special event. The entertainment items showcased the depth of talent at our school with outstanding performances by the bands, cast members of the musical “13”, as well as individual singers and performers. Of course to achieve great things, a network of support is necessary. Once again, thank you to the families and teachers who supported both our performers and our awardees and helped them achieve outstanding individual efforts.

Semester 2 reports for all year levels will be emailed home on the last day of this term in December. For Year 12 students this report will focus on the skills and knowledge gained by the students over their course of study whilst for students in the other grades, the focus is on students’ achievements, behaviour and efforts in class. If parents or carers have any concerns or queries as a result of comments made in the term report, please contact the relevant staff member for further discussion or clarification.

This year we will be holding our Merrimac in Action day on Thursday 3 December. On this day we invite all Year 6 students who have enrolled at Merrimac State High School to experience a day in the life of a high school student. Our team leaders will be on hand to lead the day’s activities and ensure that the Year 6 students mix and get to know each other as well as engage fully in the activities. The day culminates in a barbecue and swim in our refurbished pool. On this day our Peer Mentors will be on hand to ensure that the primary students have a safe as well as memorable day.

May I draw your attention to some important dates coming up in the next couple of weeks. The last day for Year 12 students is Friday 20 November. Exam shutdown for Year 10 and 11 students commences on Monday 23 November. Our Year 10 Dinner Dance and Year 11 Boat Cruise are being held on Thursday 26 November. Classes for Year 8 and 9 students will continue right until the last day of school, on Friday 11 December. Teachers have designed an exciting program for our Junior Secondary students so that they will be engaged in meaningful learning right up until the end of school. Please support the school by ensuring that your students have full attendance until the commencement of the Christmas break.

I would like to extend the season’s greetings to all of the Merrimac community.

Susan Bell
Deputy Principal

JUNIOR & SENIOR PRESENTATION NIGHTS
JUNIOR SECONDARY

Highlighting the Junior Secondary students' achievements and news headlines

CURRUMBIN FARM CAMP

On 02 and 03 November Year 7 and 8 SEP students attended the Currumbin Farm Camp.

Peter Campbell and Tiffany Steinhardt were also invited as mentors for the junior students and did an outstanding job.

Students were engaged in a number of exciting activities such as orienteering, rock climbing, archery, screen printing, animal feeding and then completed the camp with a swim at the rock pools. Camp was an excellent opportunity to develop independence and practice social skills. Students enjoyed their night time activities and were in their tents by 9.30pm.

Surprisingly, we still had a number of early risers. We look forward to our next camp adventure in 2016 at Maroon Dam.

Heike Orlow
HOD SEP

Junior Secondary

Our Junior Secondary Awards Night was held on Tuesday 3 November. It was a fantastic night to acknowledge our students who have achieved great success throughout the 2015 school year. I would like to make special congratulations to our 2016 Junior School Captains, Jessica Goody, Krystal Law, Natasha Patricks and Kaylen Ratana who were announced on the night. Their enthusiasm for our school and wanting to make a difference within the local community will only further enhance our great school in 2016.

A reminder to all Year 7, 8 and 9 students that Merrimac State High School has a NO MOBILE PHONES policy within the school grounds. Students may keep a phone in their bag for safety reasons with travel to and from school on public transport or while riding their bikes. Consequences for students not following the policy will be to confiscate their mobile phone for the rest of the day. Students may collect the phone at 3:10pm from the administration building.

This time of the year is often difficult for students to get motivated, particularly as the end of year break gets closer. However, it is essential that students are focussed and continue to work towards their personal learning goals that were set earlier in the year.

Chris Wood
HOD Junior Secondary

PLEASE UPDATE EMAIL ADDRESSES

A reminder to parents to please ensure we have your current email address on record, as school reports will be distributed via email this term. Details may be updated by contacting our office.

Congratulations to our 2016 Junior School Captains!

Jessica Goody  Krystal Law  Natasha Patricks  Kaylen Ratana
MOCK JOB INTERVIEWS

During the Year 12 exam block on Thursday 12 November over 125 students undertook a mock job interview as part of their final assessment for Senior English Communication. With the assistance of our very talented Industry Liaison Rachel Skrabanich, eight industry guests gave up their time to assist and interview our Merrimac State High School students through a series of questions and answers in response to their chosen job application. Students prepared a job portfolio with a current resume, letter of application, supporting documents, references and questions to ask their appointed interviewer. A special thank you to Darrin Larney from Busy at Work, Tony Martin from Construction Skills QLD, Sami Fletcher from Ignite Education, Cheryl Alexander from TAFE (Health), Jessica Kurtzer from Aurora Training, Stevie Jones from Department of Education and Training (SER), Sam Hendry from Kool Kids and Chris Martyr from TAFE (Health). And thank you to Year 12 English Communication Coordinator Scott Gillard and teachers Liz Biltoft, Georgia Rogers, Monica Macrossan, Kevin Hoschke and Shannon Porche for their involvement in the mock interview process. We received outstanding feedback from our industry guests and some students gained valuable advice and contacts for positions and job placements in the future. We wish all the graduating students the best of luck with their pathways in 2016.

Kylie Wilson

LOCKER CLEANOUT

A reminder that lockers must be emptied and the lock returned to the Student Services window one week prior to student departure for holidays. Please note that any belongings left in lockers over the Christmas period will be disposed of before the start of the 2016 School Year.

Congratulations to our 2016 School Captains!

Yasmin Lemon  Cebile Mpofu  Richard Ngawati  Montana Zillfleisch

SCHOOL PARKING

Please be reminded that Students and Parents are not to use the Staff Carpark. We have a large teaching and support staff that need to utilise these spaces.
Important information about school bus travel for 2016

School transport is not free. However, you may be eligible for transport assistance under the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS). APPLY NOW if you intend to use a Surfside Buslines bus to get to or from school.

Frequently asked questions

Can I get a bus pass?
There are a number of general criteria that apply to STAS. Where a student is eligible for STAS, there are two types of bus assistance available, distance based and Safety-Net travel. Visit www.translink.com.au/schooltransport for eligibility details and to print the relevant application form.

Where do I send the form to?
Applications for 2018 can be submitted now to Surfside Buslines PO Box 3038 Robina QLD 4229
Or
Email: peschools@tagroup.net.au

Who needs to apply?
If this is the first time you are applying for assistance to travel or you are moving schools, changed address, repeating a grade or are moving from primary school to secondary school you need to apply now.

Existing bus pass holders
If your details will not be changing from 2015 to 2016 you do not have to reapply.
Students who hold a 2015 bus pass will be able to travel with that pass until 18 February 2016. This allows some time for the 2016 passes to be made.
If you lose your 2015 bus pass you will have to apply to Surfside Buslines for a replacement.

How do I get my bus pass?
Surfside will process applications over the Christmas school holidays so your pass will be sent to your school for you to collect.

What if my pass hasn’t arrived by 13 Feb 2016?
Without written confirmation from TMR stating your application has been approved you will need to pay the full cost of travel. These fares are not refundable.

What if I am not eligible for STAS?
The Queensland Government offers children and students a 50% concession fare by purchasing a TransLink goCard. Passengers aged 5-14 years are eligible for a child concession fare.

Full time students 15 years or older are eligible for a Student Concession goCard. To receive a concession fare, students must always carry an approved Queensland student photo identification card or wear an official Queensland school uniform.

Timetables
Use the TransLink journey planner to plan your travel to and from school. There are helpful tips on how to plan and how to catch a bus.
Alternatively telephone 13 12 30.

Check out the new MyTransLink app. All bus, train, ferry and tram information is in the palm of your hand with customisable features so you will always get the updates that matter to you.

Further information
For more information on the School Transport Assistance Scheme, the Code of Conduct for School Children Travelling on Buses and Timetables visit www.translink.com.au