Dear Parents,

July/August

27 July Year 12 TAFE Presentation
29 July Athletics Carnival
9 August P&C Meeting
10 August Southern Cross Uni Presentation
11 August Gold Coast Dance Eisteddfod (Years 7 - 9)
12 August Gold Coast Dance Eisteddfod (Years 10 - 12)

Last weekend two Merrimac SHS teams participated in the 48km and the 96km Gold Coast Kokoda challenge. For the last 5 months these Teachers and Students have been meeting weekly and training regularly in the lead up to one of Australia’s toughest endurance events.

The 48km team consisting of Mrs Woods, Careece Hamilton-Smith, Jessica Lloyd, Tommy Montgomery and Amy Van Meygaard completed the challenge in 14 hrs and 25 min, while the 96km team of Miss Cassell, Richard Ngawati, Boston Hale, Laurence Dean and Andrew Gierse endured the conditions and pain, finishing in 35 hrs.

This experience for each of the participants and their support crew has marked a moment and a memory that will last a lifetime. They have exhibited true grit, courage, determination, teamwork and leadership as reached their goal of crossing the finish line.

A big thank you to the support team teachers Miss McGahey, Miss Quinn, Miss Kite, Mr Scaaysbrook and to our student families who helped keep everyone fed, warm and spirits high along the trail. Congratulations once again on achieving your incredible goal you have done yourselves and Merrimac SHS proud.

Last Friday evening I had the great pleasure of attending one of the Creative Generation’s performances at the Brisbane Convention Centre. The performance comprising of 1500 students across the state demonstrated the very best Queensland singers, dancers and actors we have to offer. It was a breathtaking 3 hours of performance. My congratulations to the 10 Merrimac students who performed. For them it will be one of life’s memories. My thanks also go to the teachers who supported, challenged and motivated our great performers.

Recently we surveyed students, staff and parents of Year 10 and 11 students regarding the senior timetable structure for 2017. The analysis of the results indicate strong support from students and parents for a four day week commencing at 7.50am and concluding at 3.10pm.

This option was not strongly supported by teaching staff due to the pattern of lateness shown by many students. However, the staff did acknowledged this option was the best to support university and traineeship options. This option was also acknowledged as best to support tutorials and master classes.

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In addition to your school tasks, you need to properly manage your time. Make a daily checklist. By using flash cards or summarising your learning activities, you can improve your memory and understanding. Take breaks. Establish a regular time and place for your study. Use a daily planner. You may find it helpful to keep another calendar at home, which shows your daily activities and weekly assessments. This helps you to see the larger picture.

Utilise your subject assessment planner by filling in dates of tests and assignments in your school diary or calendar at home. Analyse the spaces between assessment pieces and write down a date when you want to have a draft complete for teacher checking or study time for an exam. In addition to your daily planner, you may find it helpful to keep another calendar at home, which shows a month at a time. This helps you to see the larger picture.

Establish a regular time and place for study. This will save you time in the long run because you will have “programmed” your mind that “this is the time and place that I study.” Take breaks. Don’t schedule marathon study sessions. Several short 50 minutes sessions are better than one long session.

Make a daily checklist. Set priorities. Do the most important tasks first.

By using flash cards or summary sheets, you can use odd times to study while you’re waiting for the bus or on the toilet. (My mantra: “Programming” your mind that “this is the time and place that I study.”)

High School students are some of the busiest people in the world. To get the most from all you do, you must be in control of your time. Your success in high school depends on your use of time. Here are some important things to remember:

- Utilise your subject assessment planner by filling in dates of tests and assignments in your school diary or calendar at home. Analyse the spaces between assessment pieces and write down a date when you want to have a draft complete for teacher checking or study time for an exam.
- In addition to your daily planner, you may find it helpful to keep another calendar at home, which shows a month at a time. This helps you to see the larger picture.
- Establish a regular time and place for study. This will save you time in the long run because you will have “programmed” your mind that “this is the time and place that I study.”
- Take breaks. Don’t schedule marathon study sessions. Several short 50 minutes sessions are better than one long session.
- Make a daily checklist. Set priorities. Do the most important tasks first.
- By using flash cards or summary sheets, you can use odd times to study while you’re waiting for the bus or on the toilet. (Mathematics formulas on toilet door).

“Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential”

Winston Churchill

Chris Woods
HOD Junior Secondary

JASON GIBBS
Deputy Principal

The urge to create is equally strong in all children, boys and girls. It is imagination that counts. Imagination will define and develop their skill. While it is easier to give up than to say “I can do it”, if you don’t believe you can, then you can’t. Time spent at the beginning of a new semester imagining the possibilities of what you could become would be appropriate, and well spent. Having a passionate focus and goals will assist in making decisions in moments of distraction. Think about what you want to do, the life you wish to pursue and the person you want to be. Picture the way you want your life to be. A Doctor or a clay walker, a radiologist or a race car driver it’s your story to create. School is the opportunity to bring this dream into reality. Attack every opportunity and equip yourself with right materials and skills to create the life you have imagined for yourself. You need to do this for you and if you don’t want it enough then you will be destined to fail. It probably won’t be easy but it will definitely be worth it.

Jason Gibbs
Deputy Principal

Chris Tobin
Principal

JUNIOR SECONDARY

Highlighting the Junior Secondary students’ achievements and news headlines

FACES OF MERRIMAC

WINNERS 2

1st - Gemma Thomson, Jamieson Schmitzer, Madeline Fowler (Hip hop dance act)
2nd - Tami Reid, Isabella Auld (Song and Dance act)
3rd - Karin Mochizuki (Hip hop dance act)

HOD SOSE

HOD SOSE DEPARTMENT

Towards the end of Term 2 the Merrimac Young Historians was launched. The program uses inquiry based learning to help form a hypothesis. Following on from the Year 9 Anzac unit, the 9A academic class participated in an Anzac case study. In groups, students moved around from station to station analysing and interpreting both primary and secondary sources to form a hypothesis as to the identity of an un-researched Australian soldier killed in the Battle of Pozieres. They analysed letters, photographs and maps with information about the soldier only implicitly referred to in the sources. This gave groups the opportunity to work together in unison to help solve the puzzle. The winning team was the team who created the most complete biography of the Unknown Soldier. The program will continue on in Semester Two concentrating on a new cohort and unit of work. This has proven an exciting and new direction for students wishing to extend their historical skills and abilities.

Darren Tucker
HOD SOSE

Winston Churchill

“Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential”

Winston Churchill

Chris Woods
HOD Junior Secondary
ENGLISH EXTENSION @ MERRIMAC SHS

This talented group of Senior students are three-quarters through the extension course in English literary theory. The one year course is by invitation only and challenges our brightest students to interrogate and read texts using a range of literary lenses in preparation for tertiary studies.

At the end of Term 2 students completed their Task 2 Spoken Complex Transformation and Defense with much success thanks to their hard work and dedication along with the support and guidance of their passionate English teacher Mr Lewis. Students transformed many base texts including classics like Hans Christian Andersen’s ‘The Little Mermaid’ and ‘The Ugly Duckling’, J.M Barrie’s Peter Pan, Charles Perrault’s ‘Little Red Riding Hood’ and Grimm’s fairy tale ‘Rumpelstiltskin’.

After researching both text and world centred theories, students were able to apply their knowledge and understanding to the base text of their choice and construct their invited reading. Many students choose to write creative stories and transform the original text to a more contemporary setting and they individually choose to further research world centred approaches such as Feminist, Psychoanalytical, Marxism, Post-Colonialism and Post-Modernism theories.

We wish these Extension English students all the very best during Term 3 and their final assessment task in this course. We look forward to seeing great work from this bunch of budding writers and critical thinkers!

Kylie Wilson
HOD English

SEP DEPARTMENT

YEAR 11 & 12 students completing Certificate II Workplace Practices and Certificate I Work Preparation were on excursion at the end of Term 2 to investigate both work and leisure possibilities for the future. They had a busy day with visits to Nerang Bunnings, Masters, McDonald’s and the PCYC. It proved to be an informative day for all. Mr McLeod and Miss Quinn were pleased with students’ manners and the way they represented the school.

Ms James’ Management Skills class chose to go rock climbing as a reward for their hard work throughout the term and all had an enjoyable day.

Heike Orlow
HOD SEP