Reading at Merrimac SHS has entered the digital age. Students can now access:

> The Phoenix Reading Lounge
> Borrow Box for e books and e audio books.
> Kindles for reading during breaks

Students can download and reserve eBooks to their laptops and continue reading anywhere, anytime – even on the bus on the way home from school via an App on their phones! You can even listen to your favourite novel being read to you. For more information, go to student notices, the school web-site or pick up a handout in the library. Student Council have just created a Phoenix reading Lounge in O Block. Come and read during your breaks with other ‘like-minded’ students and staff. Prefer to read on a Kindle e-reader? They can now be borrowed in the library during breaks. The latest best sellers are available.

We’re all reading – why aren’t you?

Karen Farrow
Deputy Principal

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE
MR CHRIS TOBIN

DEAR PARENTS

In the last newsletter I discussed the upcoming Council of International Schools (CIS) visit. Richmond Patterson, Assistant to the Principal, Xavier College, Victoria and Ray Davis, CIS Associate Director School Support & Evaluation Services, Australia have now visited the school and undertaken their review.

During their visit they visited many classrooms, sought both formal and informal feedback from students, met with most teachers and engaged with the many management teams we have in the school. Our visitors also reviewed our school’s documentation and met with a number of parents.

On the final day of their visit they met with all the staff to provide feedback. The three major strengths of the school were identified as:-

• the school’s development of a well-structured, vertically articulated sequence of learning supported by the significant emphasis placed upon improving the quality of students’ learning through the development and implementation of new pedagogical practices;

MORE ON PAGE TWO
PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

- the extent to which the school has embraced the inclusion of intercultural competencies within all areas of the curriculum with special emphasis upon Asia Literacy and the greater emphasis placed upon the role of languages in supporting these aims; and
- the increased emphasis that has been placed upon knowing each student as an individual and the provision of differentiated pathways designed to suit the needs of each student.

The visitors also advised the school to focus on the features identified that will enhance future improvement including:
- continuing to build upon the work already in progress to use new pedagogies to enhance students’ learning and enable students to take greater ownership of the learning process;
- further articulating of the Guiding Statements of Philosophy and Values to provide practical objectives that will enable staff and students to more easily identify programs, actions and activities that promote the school’s philosophical aims; and
- continuing to develop and implement programs both within the formal curriculum and associated learning activities that promote the acquisition of international and intercultural understanding and the dispositions of global citizenship.

The outcome of the CIS visit is extremely pleasing as the hard work of the entire school has been recognised by an outside review process. The CIS visitors were clearly pleased with the progress that we have made over the last few years.

I am also very pleased as it has been confirmed that the school continues to improve, providing greater opportunities for our students.

Chris Tobin
Principal

DEPUTY’S DESK

NEIL STEINHARDT

I would like to extend a very big “Well done” to all of the students who have been responsible for the Talent Quests held in lunch times recently. Almost 600 students watched these events held during lunch time and the audience participation was wonderful to see and hear! I know that a few of these acts will go forward to our school’s major in-house activity in “Multicultural Night” to be held in Term 4 on 16 October. This will be another fantastic night of great entertainment organised by the students and I look forward to seeing our Hall packed out for the night.

Just back in the June/July vacation I had the privilege to be a part of our school’s excursion to China. We visited four major cities including Shanghai, Beijing and Xi’an and saw some wonderful sights including the Terracotta Warriors and the Great Wall. Thank you to Ms Wang and Mr Xu for their organisation and continuous translations. Doubtless the students’ Chinese language skills improved greatly as I am sure their shopping and bargaining skills did as I witnessed these first hand. The attached photo shows our group in Shanghai, on an unfortunately very hazy day. It is likely we will offer another trip to China in September/October holidays 2016.

Over the next few weeks of this term we will be going through the necessary processes for subject selection for students in 2015. Information evenings and course selection guides have been provided to ensure that parents and students can make the best possible choices using the most reliable information available. This process is especially important for those students entering Year 11 in 2015 as Year 11/12 is a two year course of study where subject changing mid-stream needs to be avoided. Students entering Year 10 in 2015 will study their core of English, Maths, Science and History as well as two electives.

Year 12 students are now entering a very busy part of their academic calendar with their Queensland Core skills Test (QCS) scheduled for September 2 & 3 and prior to this their term exams commencing on Monday 25 August. We wish them well.

Neil Steinhardt
Deputy Principal

Attendance

The school is actively encouraging all students to attend school every day.

If your student is marked absent unexpectedly you will receive an absence text at approximately 10.00am on the day. Parents are requested to reply by text to our message by including child's name, reason and date of absence e.g. Mary Jones sick 2/4/14. The school is unable to reply to your text messages. If absence is without parent knowledge, please contact the Office on 5595 8666, for this to be followed up.

Parents may prefer to telephone the school, email absences@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au or send a written note delivered by your child to the Student Services window.

A medical certificate is required for prolonged absence through illness (more than 3 days) and for all students absent during examination periods. If your child has a contagious disease e.g. chicken pox, measles, conjunctivitis etc. please advise the school and contact your doctor for a medical certificate and requirements for length of absence required by Education Queensland.

Parents of children up to 17 years of age are obliged by law to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and that they attend every school day unless there is a legitimate reason. Parents are discouraged from taking children from school during term time for vacations or extended absences. An application for exemption from school must be made for any absence longer than ten days.

Students must attend school during their timetabled classes and can be excused for the following reasons only – sickness, temporary or permanent infirmity, unavoidable cause (e.g. death in family) or fear of infection with disease. Students are not permitted to work paid employment during school hours unless special dispensation has been granted by the Principal. It is unlawful for employers to engage students when they should be at school.
During Semester Two the English department has implemented the CARS and STARS Reading Comprehension Program in Year 8 with great success. This program focuses on active reading strategies and utilizing best practice and research in effective reading instruction. This program aims to improve our reading and writing achievement in Junior Secondary and will eventually move towards a school-wide approach to reading.

Literacy Coach Angela Collins has trained eight English teachers in the explicit reading strategies and is working closely with four classroom teachers to model and coach the strategies in class with Year 8 English students. Teachers have thoroughly enjoyed this professional development opportunity and the support received in class with our new teacher aide Megan Thompson. Megan is working with students who have been identified at low reading level as well as our high level readers. She is a wonderful addition to our English team. Megan can also be found assisting our students in learning support and in the library.

Student response has been very enthusiastic and teachers have noticed an increased improvement in student engagement, behaviour, effort and high order thinking skills. The CARS and STARS model will assist students in preparation for NAPLAN in Year 9 and help build literacy skills across the four key learning areas of English, Maths, History and Science.

Remember active readers make active thinkers! Keep reading!

For more information on CARS & STARS go to www.carsandstars.com.au

Kylie Wilson
HOD English

Unlock your potential

With five weeks already gone in this term students will have already completed pieces of assessment for their subjects. Parents can support their child by reviewing the assessment overview that details when the due date of each piece of assessment is and help manage their time to achieve success. A great way to access further assistance is to get in contact with your child’s teachers and ask for ways they can facilitate the learning at school at home. Merrimac also conducts “Homework Club” (which is on Tuesday and Thursday starting at 3.20pm in the library) that can be of assistance to students studying for exams or working on assignments.

Congratulations to all the students who made it onto the Merrimac State High School Academic List for outstanding achievement on their semester one report cards. These students achieved all As and B’s and a very large contingent came from both Year 8 and 9 students. Their names will be added to the awards board located at the entrance to the school hall.

In the next newsletter I look forward to talking about the Year 9’s success in their NAPLAN results which parents will be receiving in the coming weeks.

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

Chris Wood
HOD Junior Secondary

Special Olympics

Special Olympics (SO) is a global movement providing year round sports training and athletic competition through a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with an Intellectual Disability.

From October 20-25 this year, Melbourne Victoria will host 1,000 Australian athletes with an intellectual disability, representing their state or territory at the Special Olympics Australia National Games.

With competition across 16 Olympic-type sports, the Games will be a huge celebration of ability as well as a qualifying event for next year’s Special Olympics World Summer Games in Los Angeles where athletes will have the opportunity to represent Australia on the world stage.

Queensland is taking a team of 202 athletes and two of our Merrimac State High Students will be there representing their State.

Casey van den Brink from Year 8 is the youngest of 8 Queenslanders chosen to compete in Equestrian. Riders will participate in four events, English Equitation, Dressage, Prix Caprilli and Working Trails.

Casey won a silver medal for her Working Trail ride at the State games, which is where she was selected for Nationals. Casey has had a passion for horses for as long as her family can remember and began riding horses with lessons at Riding for the Disabled when she turned 4.

Rani (Year 11) is competing in Athletics. The National Games will begin with an Opening Ceremony held at the Lakeside Stadium, Albert Park. Athletes will then spend four days competing in their chosen sports before the games wrap up with the Closing Ceremony being held at Luna Park in St Kilda on Friday evening.

We will all be thinking of the girls, wishing them the best of luck and reminding them of the Special Olympics Athlete’s Oath - “Let me win. But if I Cannot Win, Let Me Be Brave in the Attempt.”

With thanks from parent Roschell Van den Brink, who has passed on this information.

Heike Orlow
HOD SEU

Reading @ Merrimac SHS

Highlighting the junior secondary students achievements and news headlines
Students in Year 8 are currently engaged in a 6 week program of gymnastics with the Gold Coast Gymnastics Club. The students are working on a variety of floor and apparatus routines which is really challenging their physical abilities in relation to strength, flexibility and balance. The Year 9 students are working through a 5 week fitness program with the PCYC to broaden their ideas on ways to develop fitness which has included, Pilates and Boxercise. The Year 10 students have been completing work in self-defence with Arakan Martial Arts. The students have really enjoyed the challenges provided in learning and executing self-defence techniques.

Warren Joseph
HOD HPE

Choosing a language in the senior years is particularly beneficial for a number of reasons. Australia is a melting pot of nations making it one of the most multicultural nations in the world. Studying a foreign language allows students to participate more effectively and responsibly in a multi-cultural world if one knows another language. Foreign Language study creates more positive attitudes and less prejudice toward people who are different. In addition, it teaches and encourages respect for other peoples: it fosters an understanding of the interrelation of language and human nature.

In regards to the benefits for future prospects, choosing a language in your senior years allows you to gain OP points which will assist in choosing a university degree. For future employment; business and foreign language skills together can make an employee more valuable in the marketplace. Furthermore it enhances one’s opportunities in government, business, medicine, law, technology, military, marketing etc.

Foreign language learning opens many doors and gives the students a distinct advantage in the global market; it leads to an appreciation of cultural diversity and expands one’s view and limits the barriers between people.

In the last school holiday in June/July, we had the opportunity to take a school trip to China. This was such a great experience for all students and teachers to explore this ancient country with its rich history and immerse themselves in this modern China with its friendly people.

Marianna Crow
HOD LOTE (Acting)
2015 TAFE Queensland Gold Coast Direct Entry Program
Direct Entry application forms into TAFE Gold Coast Diploma courses commencing Semester 1 2015 were sent to Year 12 student email accounts 15 July 2014. Students who completed school based traineeships, work experience or other extra-curricular programs are encouraged to apply.

Final application documents need to be given to Mrs Careless, Guidance Officer, by Monday 8 September 2014.

Start Up Apprentice Program
Students who have “a great business idea” and are looking to start their own business - there is an entrepreneurial program that has been developed on the Gold Coast. It’s called Start Up Apprentice and details are online. Please visit www.startupapprentice.com.au

GoGetta Job (Jobs for Youth)
Free registration online. Apply for school based / part / full time apprenticeships / traineeships; school leaver; casual or other employment opportunities. Visit www.gogettajob.com.au

September Holiday Work with Sea World
To apply online visit https://www.onetest.com.au/wvtp/ap52323/

Fingers Crossed
Good luck to Hannah Holloway, Gabrielle Mittermayer, Ben Dixon, KC Elkington; Kiana Gray; Yannis George-Marsters and Kristian Snjegota. These students progressed from application to first stage interview for school-based traineeships with Green Cross Vets and Prestige Service Training (Dream World) respectively.

Rachel Skrabanich
Industry Liaison Officer

Queensland Health Reminder: Spread the facts not the flu

QH top tips for keeping the flu contained this season.

If you are running a fever (have a high temperature)—stay home.

Take hand washing seriously—it takes at least 20 seconds to wash correctly. Best practise is, rinse with water first, then soap over all hand surfaces, rinse soap off completely and dry properly. If necessary, apply hand cream as protective barrier.

Cough or sneeze into a tissue, use your elbow or sleeves if you do not have a tissue available.

Dispose of used tissues immediately and wash your hands.

The flu is usually avoidable, so do not leave it to luck—act on the facts and stay well.

Make sure you have your own drink bottles, earphones, etc. as these are potential sources of infection when shared and we are often at our most contagious before we realise we are becoming unwell.

Ensuring we have enough fluid is essential in both colder & warmer months but easy to forget when the weather is cool. Carrying your own water bottle with you is a good reminder.

Nurse Jackie 0432 00 5265 jatki89@eq.edu.au

LEO OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

On Sunday 10th August, Merrimac once again hosted the District Leo of the Year Competition. We have been hosting it every year since 2008. This year there were 10 contestants from 4 different Leo Clubs from Capalaba, Ballina, Robina and Merrimac. This year Merrimac had two contestants – our Leo President Kobi Rogers and our Leo Secretary Tayla Bourne. Both competed with enthusiasm and passion.
BMD Northcliffe Surf Club will soon be having their Sign-On Day for our Junior Activities Program (5-13yrs)

For students who may be interested in joining the Surf Lifesaving movement:-

**BMD NORTHCLIFFE SURF CLUB**
Nipper Sign On Day / Proficiency Swim
Sunday 31st August
TSS, The Southport School, 8.30-11.30am
First day of Nippers
Sunday 21st Sept, 8.15am

Contact Tiarne Smith for more information

**tsmith@northcliffesurfclub.com.au**

www.bmdnorthcliffe.com.au

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FREE 4 week program for parents and family carers of children with Autism or Asperger’s.

**Surfing the Spectrum!**

A four week well-being program for Parents and Carers of children with Autism / Aspergers

_The Program_

The program will include topics such as:

- Acknowledging your own expertise
- Juggling multiple roles: carer, therapist, advocate!
- Boundaries and communication
- Mindfulness

Participants have the option of follow-up individual counselling sessions.

_Registration_

To register your attendance or find out more, please contact Samantha: 3723 5001 or svdler@carersqld.asn.au

**Program Dates:**

- Tues Aug 26
- Tues Sep 2
- Tues Sep 9
- Tues Sep 16

10 am — 12 noon

**Morning tea included!**

Location

1/1414 Logan Road
Mt Gravatt East 4122

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**Contact Us**

**School Information**

Dunlop Court, Mermaid Waters 4218
Q Supercentre, P O Box 5610, Qld 4218
P 07 5595 8666 | F 07 5595 8600
Office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au
CRICOS Code 00608A

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**LEARN TO SAVE LIVES & MAKE FRIENDS FOR LIFE!**

We believe we have one of the best Junior Activities Programs available in Australia through our team of professional staff & coaching team aimed at providing your child with the skills & education to be safe...

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**Age groups & Pool Swim Proficiencies for the 2014/2015 season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born Between</th>
<th>Age Cap Colour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 8</td>
<td>Fluoro Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 – 12yrs</td>
<td>Fluoro Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 – 15yrs</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 18yrs</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 21yrs</td>
<td>Light Blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 – 25yrs</td>
<td>Star Cap</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 – 30yrs</td>
<td>Star Cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+ yrs</td>
<td>Star Cap</td>
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</tbody>
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**Membership costs**

- Juniors (nippers) $120 per niper
- Junior Associate (parents) $100 per adult
- Family (2 nippers + 2 parents) $340
- (2 nippers + 1 parent) $340

**New members always welcome**

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**CRiCos Code 00608A**