MERRIMAC MOMENTS
Merrimac Moments allows us to showcase the opportunities and experiences available to our students.

I am extremely proud of the effort and dedication of the staff who make this range of opportunities possible. However, it is when students participate and reap the rewards of their hard work, that our staff feel truly satisfied.

Students who make the most of these experiences grow and develop into valuable citizens, who exemplify the school’s values of Respect, Responsibility and Reliability.

Please share the enjoyment of our achievements.

Chris Tobin
Principal
AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM 8, 9 & 10

Twelve months of planning and preparation by Merrimac teachers has become reality with implementation of the Australian Curriculum across English, Maths and Science for Years 8, 9, and 10.

The new curriculum has raised the expectations of all students and has focussed attention on depth of learning. Teachers are excited by both the quality and quantity of resources available to implement this challenging curriculum.

Parents are encouraged to assist their teenagers by viewing the materials students are engaging with. Some resources are now provided on laptops enabling students to access their learning anywhere anytime.

TECHNOLOGY ENHANCES PEDAGOGY

The roll out of laptops to every student through Years 9 to 12 in the ‘One to One’ Laptop Program has enabled whole school transformation of teaching practice in a contemporary learning environment.

Teachers now explore the ‘HOW’ of the curriculum and provide pedagogical choices to accommodate differences in student learning. This improves individual student outcomes.

Available 24/7, personal laptops allow students to reflect on their learning of the day or revisit concepts or skill-sets to achieve a fuller understanding of lesson content. Laptops also enable improved communication between students, teachers and parents/guardians.

SUMMIT PROGRAM YEAR 8 – 10

Summit Programs provide specialised, accelerated learning for students with exceptional talents in academic studies, sport or performing arts. The programs provide additional time for talented students to develop their skills and abilities in a very supportive environment. Students stay together as a group in Years 8 – 10 which allows strong relationships which maximise student learning.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

As an Internationally accredited school, we are proud to host 35 students from such diverse countries as Germany, Brazil, Japan, Italy, Finland, Korea and Iran. Students enrol from three months, up to five years, and contribute to the richness of academic life. They bring a truly “International” awareness to our school community as they live with our families and help prepare all our students for successful living in the global community.
HIGH RESOLVES LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

This year we are excited to implement the High Resolves Program for all Middle School students. The program ensures leadership skills are continually developed in our youngest students as they mature and ultimately take on important roles as School Captains, Prefects and leaders in their senior years. All Year 8 students will participate in the Global Citizens module which will build the skills of cross cultural communication and fair decision-making. In Years 9 and 10, these students will reinforce leadership skills through specific community projects in the Global Leadership module. We thank the University of the Third Age (U3A) and the Lions Club of Mudgeeraba for their financial support to deliver this program. We are proud of our investment in our future school leaders.

CERT I IN CONSTRUCTION

Certificate 1 in Construction is one of the Vocational Education and Training Certificates offered through the Industrial Technology and Design Department. Students begin this Certificate in Year 10 before continuing with a weekly one day full training course in Year 11.

Students have the option to be registered and mentored through Construction Skills Queensland’s Doorways 2 Construction Program. This enables them to engage in structured workplace learning. Students registered in the D2C program can earn an extra 2 points towards their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE).

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (SEP)

SEP students are an integral part of our school community. The SEP supports a wide diversity of learners through comprehensive, individualised programs. Wide ranging subjects cater for most disabilities and levels of ability; Horticulture, Furniture Restoration, Personal Development, Work Skills and VET Certificate Courses. Two SEP teachers are trained to deliver the ‘Secret Agent Society’ social skills program. Senior students not preparing for further education are given the opportunity of work experience, links with employment agencies and traineeships.
SPORTING HEROS

Jessica Hobbin – Selected in the Queensland Secondary Schools Swimming Team has made all her early morning training sessions worthwhile.

Joel Luca – Dynamic on the squash court, Joel is now ranked No 10 in Australia in the Under 18 age group.

Girls Junior AFL Team – This team from the High Performance Sport classes won the Gold Coast Youth Cup and were runners up in the South East Queensland competition.

Girls Rugby League Team - The girls competed at the Western Queensland Division Championships against schools from renowned Rugby League areas such as Charleville and Roma. The girls dominated and won the championships undefeated.

Jessica Johnson – Construction Fiji

In September last year Jessica Johnson in Year 11, set out on an adventure of a lifetime in Fiji. Jessica is a member of the Certificate I in Construction class, with ambitions of becoming a project manager.

Through the charity organisation ‘Project Faith in Action’ Jessica constructed a pathway and small house for an unknown but deserving Grandma, Timama Koto. Timama Koto had been confined to a small shed only big enough for a mattress and small suitcase.

Jessica completed a large part of her 160 hours of structured work placement while volunteering in this worthwhile selfless task.

THE ACADEMIC LIST

The Academic List was implemented in 1998 to honour students achieving at a high academic level. Awardees receive a badge and a semester bar for each semester of achievement.

To date over 1360 students have been on the Academic List for at least 1 Semester or more. Students work hard to achieve these results and we congratulate students who have accomplished this prestigious award. This is a proud tradition at Merrimac State High School.

YOUTH AWARDS

Congratulations to two senior students, Jenny Nguyen and Rachael Reich-Steel. Both students were chosen as finalists in Leadership Awards from a field of 60 South Coast Regional students. Jenny was nominated for the category ‘Community and Leadership’ whilst Rachael was successful in winning the ‘Performing Arts’ category. The girls were presented with awards on International Women’s Youth Day in March.
GOLD COAST JUNIOR COUNCIL PROGRAM

Elizabeth Johnson and Michael Knight, two Year 11 students, have been elected onto the Junior Gold Coast City Council Executive Committee for 2012. Two Year 10 representatives, Kaitlyn Parker and Tomi Chalis have joined them.

In May 2012 the Junior Council farewelled Jake Buckingham, our current School Captain, as Deputy Junior Mayor. Jake has performed an outstanding role over the past year representing our school and the Junior Council in wider community activities. Elizabeth and Michael will continue this successful Merrimac SHS legacy.

YEAR 8 CAMP

Year 8 students, accompanied by their teachers and Year level Coordinators, became better acquainted at Camp. Over two days, students challenged themselves physically and mentally, in developing important team-building skills at Tyalgum Ridge. Year 8 camp is an important event for students to familiarise themselves with each other and with school values as they embark on their five years of secondary schooling.

HERON ISLAND REEF TRIP

During term four the Marine Department conducts an annual excursion to Heron Island on the Great Barrier Reef. This trip provides marine students with an excellent opportunity to apply the skills they have learnt in class at a real coral cay.

Students explore the coral reef and snorkel with a variety of shark, turtle and fish species. They stay at the world renowned University of Queensland Research Station and develop an appreciation of the fragility of the reef environment. This is a unique learning opportunity for our students.

SKI TRIP

Annually, students have the opportunity to join an action packed Snow Tour to New Zealand, Thredbo, Falls Creek or Mt Buller. No experience in snow skiing or snowboarding is necessary but after five full days of lessons with professional instructors all students make it look easy. Following their Alpine experience, students sightsee in Sydney or Melbourne before flying home. Most students consider our annual Ski Trip to be one of the highlights of their high school experience.

ALADDIN

Our talented students and staff staged a spectacular performance of Aladdin at the Gold Coast Arts Centre on 25 May. A matinee performance was presented to local primary students and our Year 8 cohort. Audiences were entertained by one hundred and fifty two talented student performers.
PEER MENTORS

The Peer Mentors welcome our Year 8 students through a range of activities in Orientation Week, Chalk Art Day and Merrimac by Moonlight. Mentors orientate newly enrolled students throughout the term. The Mentors also assist Year 8 in their High Resolves course, a program designed to provide them with leadership skills and promote inclusivity. As facilitators of the course, the Mentors are learning valuable leadership and communication skills themselves, boosting their confidence as leaders of the school. The Year 11 Peer Mentor students are committed to promoting positive relationships at school.

BOND UNIVERSITY LEGAL MOOT

Legal Eagles Jake Buckingham and Jake Durrington soared high at the recent Bond University Regional Legal Mooting competition. Both boys displayed excellent advocacy skills against other high schools to win their case. Nationally, Merrimac is the only state school to reach this stage.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SURF CAMP

In the idyllic setting of Byron Bay, 22 international students spent 3 days learning and practising the skills of surfing. All students were able to get to the ‘standing up’ stage of riding waves. No doubt families and friends back home in Europe and Asia would have been extremely envious after viewing the photographs. The wonderful surf camp offered to international students is unique to Merrimac SHS.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council provides an opportunity for a diverse range of students in all year levels to demonstrate their leadership abilities while they work collaboratively to manage projects within the school community. Student Council is involved in fundraising for worthy community causes and projects to benefit students. The Council also organises the successful annual Talent Quest and Multicultural Night concerts.
OUTDOOR GYM / FITNESS TRAIL

A successful submission to the Community Benefit Fund has achieved a grant of $30,000 to design and install an outdoor fitness facility. Students will be challenged, while having great fun, in using machines and static equipment to improve their fitness. The school is thankful for the support of the P & C Association for this innovative project.

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Our school has been fortunate to participate in the School Maintenance Investment Program (SMIP) which has allowed us the opportunity to select and procure maintenance works using private contractors.

We are grateful for the $50,000 donation from the P and C, $100,000 from the State Government and $50,000 from the school budget which has allowed us to complete $200,000 in maintenance works throughout the school.
DAVID SKUSE – GROUNDS OFFICER

The school has recently appointed an outstanding new groundsman, David Skuse. David has over 10 years Green Keeping experience and his contribution has been invaluable. Community praise and recognition regarding the appearance and maintenance of our school grounds continues to be regularly received.

ACARA PANELIST FOR SENIOR ENGLISH

English teacher Kylie Wilson has been appointed to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Senior English Advisory Panel. Her role will continue until the implementation of the Senior English curriculum in 2014. Ms Wilson travels to Sydney for national meetings and participates in monthly teleconferences for the consultation process of the Senior English draft syllabus. Every state and territory has two representatives however Ms Wilson is one of few teachers who currently teaches Senior English in the classroom.

INNOVATIVE TEACHER AWARD

We congratulate Ms Rose Speers, our nominee for The 2012 Gold Coast State Secondary Schools’ Innovative Teacher Award. This prestigious award is presented at a Gala Ball held in August at The Gold Coast Convention Centre. Each year Education Queensland acknowledges the contribution of excellent, innovative teachers in our district. Rose is an outstanding Merrimac SHS teacher who excels in teaching Visual and Creative Arts. She contributes significantly to the lives of our students, enriches our culture of learning and embodies the school values in her work with young people.
COMMUNITY

KOKODA CHALLENGE

After a very rewarding experience with the challenge last year Merrimac has again entered two teams in the Stan Bisset Cup and an additional junior team in the Jim Stillman Cup. Students step out alongside thousands of adult competitors for the massive walk through the Gold Coast Hinterland. The average high school team takes between 28 and 34 hours to finish as they honour the spirit forged on the Kokoda Track in 1942 with mateship, endurance, courage and sacrifice. The group of 20 students and 3 teachers train in earnest in preparation for the challenge.

ANZAC DAY

On 24 April our school community held its annual commemorative service. This moving and memorable experience, organised and conducted by the School Leaders, was made possible by the dedicated teamwork of the School Band, School Choir and Cadets of 232 Australian Air Force Cadet Squadron and 10 Army Cadet Unit.

Guest speakers included the Australian Defence Force, Surfers Paradise and Southport RSL Sub-Branches and Gold Coast Legacy, together with our local Federal and State Members of Parliament. Guests commented favourably on the professionalism of our service and the respect and reverence shown by the student body.

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A)

Our school continues to enjoy the support and association with the members of the University of the Third Age. The group adds a dynamic to the school that enhances the experiences of our students.
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