Over recent years there has been considerable attention given to developing scores or indices of student success.

While these indicators have merit, it is the additional opportunities, experiences and partnerships that add the extra value to the schooling experience.

It is with a great sense of pride that I recommend these stories that capture the opportunities, experiences and partnerships.

It is this combination of academic achievement, opportunities and a school built on the values of Respect, Responsibility and Reliability that delivers great education for students.

Chris Tobin
Principal
JUNIOR SECONDARY
Developing the Junior Secondary Phase has been an on-going process which will meet the unique developmental and educational priorities for Years 7, 8 and 9 students. As year 7 students enter high school in 2015, it is imperative that this process be strategic and effective to maximise student success.

The time and effort invested in the planning and design of the new school building will ensure a distinct area for our Junior Secondary students.

On-going quality relationships with our local primary schools are ensured through events including Primary School visits, Lightning Sports Carnivals and the *Early Flyers* Program for years 5 and 6 students.

IT UNI SUBJECTS
As part of our strong links with Griffith University we are pleased to deliver *GriffIT*. *GriffIT* offers access to first year university courses in Information Technology. Upon completion of the course, students are guaranteed entry to Griffith University having already completed 2 units towards their degree.

GRIFFMATH
*GriffMath* gives our students access to first year university courses. Year 10 Academic Summit students are guaranteed entry to Griffith University Mathematics. By completing Senior Maths B in Years 10 and 11, they will incorporate *GriffMath* into their Year 12 timetables.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM
The Australian Curriculum is implemented across English, Maths, History and Science for Years 8, 9 and 10. In the past 12 months, Merrimac teachers have ‘adopted and adapted’ the new curriculum, focussing their attention on the depth of learning whilst personalising the learning experience for each student.

Teachers differentiate using the vast array of resources available through the Curriculum 2 Classroom (C2C) materials. All resources are available 24/7 on student laptops.

These pedagogical choices accommodate learning styles and lesson engagement. Student outcomes have been improved.

MERRIMAC MOMENTS 2013
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

The International Program has developed since 2001 when we joined the Off Shore Program with schools in China (Jinan and then Xian). From the mid 2000s our focus changed as short term students arrived for six month stays. Students come from diverse countries including Germany, Brazil, Italy and Norway. We work together to ensure a great homestay and a valued educational school experience.

HIGH RESOLVES

The High Resolves leadership initiative involves all Year 8 students in a Global Citizenship Program. Initial training empowers and encourages them to ‘make a difference’ in their world. Year 11 Peer mentors facilitate and strengthen relationships with Year 8 classes.

Year 9 students participate in a two year Global Leadership Program which benefits our local community. Student Leadership skills develop as they move into the Senior School.

HOMEWORK CLUB

Many students take advantage of Homework Club 2013 on Tuesday & Thursday afternoons from 3.15 – 4.15pm. Students receive afternoon tea and assistance with homework and assignments. Student outcomes and student engagement across the school have been improved.
JAPANESE MARTIAL ARTS
Ryan Warriner and TJ Munkley represented Australia in The All Japan Tae Kwon Do Championships in Tokyo in April this year. Congratulations to Ryan and TJ who both placed first – an outstanding achievement.

GIRLS RUGBY LEAGUE
The Girls’ Rugby League Program is looking very bright for the future with 40 girls participating during Terms 3 and 4. The girls aim to become Qld State Champions for the third year in a row. The girls will also attain their Referees Badge through an NRL Program.

GRANT HARRIS: U15 IRONMAN
Grant Harris won the 2013 Australian Under 15 Ironman event held at North Kirra in April. Grant collected the Matthew Barclay Memorial Trophy for winning this event in memory of his former competitor and friend, Mathew Barclay.

RUBY JOHNSON: MUSIC AWARD WINNER
Ruby has been accepted into the State wide music program M.O.S.T. She has also been selected to participate in the State Honours Ensemble Program. Ruby will also attend a Pacific Honours Ensemble Program in Seattle (USA) as a recipient of one of four Australia-wide scholarships.

KIAH SHANKS: DANCE SUCCESS
Kiah’s talent and passion for dance has earned her a scholarship to the Broadway Dance Centre, Times Square New York. This scholarship will provide Kiah with a big step towards fulfilling her dream as a dancer.

RACHAEL REICH-STEEL: ROLE MODEL AWARD
Rachael Reich-Steel has been awarded the Role Model Award from the International Women’s Day Organisation. In 2012, Rachael received the Performing and Leadership Award. Rachael performs at national and state events where she utilises her talents in aiding the underprivileged.

SKI TRIP
Students participate in a six day Alpine experience at one of Australia’s top Ski Resorts. After living “on-snow”, becoming proficient snowboarders and skiers, and sightseeing in Sydney or Melbourne, our beach-living students fly home. Our annual Snow Tour is always a highlight.

BIOLOGY CAMP
A key excursion for Senior Biology students is a 2 day camp at Jacob’s Well Environmental Education Centre. Students complete field work, trek through mangroves, trawl the ocean floor and observe and record species within the local ecosystem. Students gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a biologist.
INTERNATIONAL SURF CAMP

International students spend 3 days learning to surf at the very beautiful Byron Bay. They engage in a program of ‘learn to surf’ instruction as surfing is an important part of the Australian culture. The students love this experience and rate this camp as one of the highlights of their Australian stay.

THE FACES OF MERRIMAC

This year’s school production, entitled The Faces of Merrimac, followed the format of the popular show X Factor. The performance provided the Merrimac community with an opportunity to showcase their talents on a world-class stage. The production included 20 exciting acts, over 300 performers, 150 dancers and 80 student-performers from Merrimac State School. We congratulate Year 9 student Montana Zillfleisch who is the 2013 Face of Merrimac and an Australian Dance Aerobic Champion.
SOMERSET CELEBRATION OF LITERATURE

Academic Summit Classes again experienced the Somerset College Celebration of Literature. Highlights included author Jackie French’s discussion on writing novels, sharing Paula Weston’s 16 year writing journey and meeting authors at the book signings. Students participated in a Guinness World Record breaking attempt by balancing books on their heads. Literature loving students enjoy this creative, vibrant festival each year.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council provides an opportunity for students to work collaboratively and manage projects within the school community. Fundraising this year has raised $500 for Careflight Queensland. The Student Council also organises the highly successful Multicultural Night; a concert involving over 100 student performers.

PEER MENTORS

The Peer Mentors welcomed Year 8 students in a range of activities during Orientation Week and Merrimac by Moonlight. These Year 11 students assist all new students settling into Merrimac SHS. The Year 11 Peer Mentors promote positive school relationships whilst developing their own leadership skills.

DEBATING

The Senior Debating team, comprising Mitchell Howell, Zoe Sutherland, Shannon Minehan and Alisa Sparks, and coached by Ms Angel Braithwaite, have had a victorious start to the season. Debaters prepare formal speeches on given topics, thereby developing their critical reasoning, persuasive writing and public speaking skills. Debating is a much valued extra-curricular activity.

POLKA-DOTTED RHINO CLUB

The Polka-Dotted Rhino badge symbolises academic excellence. Students and staff achieving excellent academic results are invited to become members of this exclusive ‘herd’. Wearing their Polka- Dotted Rhino badge gives students access to specialised lunchtime workshops, guest speakers and opportunities to collaborate on challenging projects.
YEAR 7 BUILDING

Planning is well under way for a state of the art building which will accommodate 260 Year 7 students in 2015.

The new building will have 11 general learning classrooms, 2 flexible learning areas and a staffroom to accommodate teachers and support staff.

The design also incorporates a large undercover area to double as a great shaded play area.

Construction commences in June 2013 and will conclude in March 2014.

SCIENCE BLOCK REFURBISHMENT

The Science Block refurbishment has been eagerly anticipated for many years. The original building; largely untouched since it was built in the 1970s, will be redesigned into flexible and functional spaces. These new laboratories will incorporate the key features of traditional Science classrooms whilst enabling students to engage with 21st century technology.

DIRECT TO MARKET

The school now delivers its maintenance works via a program called Direct to Market. This exciting new government initiative increases the school’s ability to prioritise work and to provide students with the best possible facilities.
STAFF

SUPPORT STAFF

Highly qualified and professional staff support our students. We welcomed Lionel Teleaga as new School Chaplain in May. Lionel, a talented musician and sports coach, is mostly found with the students on the oval at lunch times.

Youth Support Coordinator Amy O’Grady works her magic with many of our students through programs such as the ‘Compass Program’ where our students mentor children with special needs at Mudgeeraba Special School.

The Student Support Team also includes Kate Careless (Guidance Officer), Jackie Atkinson (School Nurse), Sue Taylor (Indigenous Support), Abida Francois (ESL support) and Kath Wolski and Marita Costello (Learning Support).

MARTIN ROCHESTER

Mr Martin Rochester, a Modern History teacher since 1992, is committed to educating students in achieving their highest outcomes. Martin has played a significant role in the implementation of the Australian History Curriculum and as part of his outstanding dedication, organises both the Anzac Day and the Remembrance Day ceremonies. These ceremonies involve both the local RSL and Canungra Army personnel. The military precision of Martin’s organisation can be attributed to his previous career in the Royal Australian Navy.
ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

The annual ANZAC Day Commemoration was attended by a number of guest speakers from Legacy and the RSL. We especially welcomed former student, Captain Kristen Lineham from the Land Warfare Centre Canungra. A dedicated team of students including the school Captains and Prefects, the school Band, Choir and cadets were involved in the professional service.

MERRIMAC CARES

Creativity
Activity
Responsibility
Excellence
Service

Merrimac Cares is a student community service group which:

- Raises awareness of Emergency Services
- Visits Mermaid Beach Tri-Care facility where students engage with senior citizens
- Visits Pacific Fair Shopping Centre to strengthen relationships with the local retail community
- Assists with school gardening
- Acknowledges the contribution of staff with cards and gifts.
DUKE OF EDINBURGH

In *The Duke of Edinburgh Award*, students undertake activities in Physical Recreation, Skills, Volunteering and Adventurous Journeys. There are 3 levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold. More than 50 Bronze, 8 Silver and 5 Gold Awards have been achieved during our 10 year participation. Camps undertaken range from local areas such as the Currumbin and Numinbah Valleys, to overseas destinations such as China, Japan and Bali.

ABW

*Australian Business Week* is an initiative bringing businesses and schools together to produce positive outcomes. Students elect CEOs and run mock companies as they work closely with staff and local businesses. Interpersonal skills and group problem solving abilities are developed as students compete for awards. Our students receive on-going benefits through offers of school-based traineeships.

SUMMIT PROGRAMS

*Summit Programs* are for high achieving students with exceptional talents in academic studies, sports, digital technologies and performing arts. These programs extend and accelerate students to reach their full potential in their specific area of specialisation. Highly qualified teachers, with a passion for learning, lead the Summit programs. Summit students are mentored and extend their learning through competitions, excursions, camps and subject specific extra-curricular activities.