Welcome Back

Welcome back to the 2015 school year. I hope that you all managed to find some time to relax and enjoy the holiday period.

A warm welcome in particular to the many new families commencing their association with Mont Albert Primary School this year; 29 new students across Years 1-6 commenced today. I am sure you will find your time here most rewarding and enjoyable.

In welcoming new parents, I hope you will take the opportunity to involve yourself as fully as possible in the life of the school this year as far as time permits.

We got off to a fabulous start today; our present school enrolment is 746 students. Our 104 Foundations/Prep students commence officially next Monday; a very special school picnic to begin the 2015 school year was held for them today on the Barloa Road oval. Staff officially returned to school on Wednesday which gave the opportunity for some very valuable professional learning facilitated by Lisa McInnes Smith, based on Resilience, which is a key priority for our new Strategic Plan under the umbrella of Student Wellbeing and Welfare. Lisa is an expert at helping people increase their potential and transform their personal performance. Raised in a family of sporting professionals she took on the challenge early in her life to find out what separates achievers from the rest. She succeeded in her quest and in doing so she became an achiever in her own right. Lisa commenced her career as a Secondary School teacher then set a goal to positively influence one million Australian teenagers, a journey that lasted eight and a half years and has led her to facilitating corporate keynote presentations around the world. She is the first person outside the North American continent to be inducted into the international Speaker Hall of Fame. Her passion and purpose was most evident on Wednesday as she addressed all staff to ignite their desire to fulfill their potential. Lisa will also work with Senior School students and will run a parent forum in March.

Thursday was a planning day for all teams.

Thank you to staff and parents for your support in making sure that the transition back to school has been so positive after a very long summer break for our students. Our staff and students across the school from Foundation/Prep through to Year 6 are spending their first two weeks at school focussing on an Inquiry Unit titled “Learning to Learn.”

Along with our new students, we also welcomed some new staff members who have commenced at Mont Albert PS this year. Welcome – Ms Paula Heenan, new to the Assistant Principal role, Miss Bessy Brouwer, Ms Nikki Panagos, Miss Selena Varghese, Miss Lisa Yates, Mr Craig Gooding (now in a teaching role) and Mrs Kelly Woolley. We also welcome back Mrs Emma Read and Mrs Brenda Corr.

Mr Max Drummy will be assisting Mr Luke Byrne again this year and teaching Physical Education each Friday.

Team Leaders for 2015 are as follows: Prep/Foundation – Miss Tarryn Olden; Junior School/Years 1 & 2 – Mrs Wendy Mackie; Middle School/Years 3 & 4 – Mr Taila Donald and Senior School /Years 5 & 6 – Miss Anna Johnstone. These teachers along with Mr Luke Byrne, Ms Paula Heenan, Mr Craig Crouch, Mrs Cara Morford, Mrs Sue Broadbent and I, form the school’s Leadership Team.

If you have any queries or concerns at anytime regarding the general welfare and wellbeing of your child please do not hesitate to make a time to see Paula, Craig or I, however your first port of call should always be your child’s classroom teacher.

Assembly

Our first Assembly for the school year will be held on Monday where we will have the opportunity to present our Year 6 students with their ‘Mont Albert Primary School Badge.’ We will also be announcing further school Student Leadership positions for Specialist subject areas. 2015 Junior School Council Representatives will be presented with their badges at Assembly on Monday 9th February and Environmental Action Group Representatives will be presented with their badges at Assembly on Monday 23rd February.

February Parent/Teacher Meetings & Prep Information Evening

Over the next few weeks I encourage you to take the opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher. Formal Parent/Teacher ‘getting to know you’ interviews will be conducted for students in Years 1 - 6 the week beginning Monday 16th February, whilst the Foundation/Prep teachers will conduct an Information Evening for all parents of Prep students on Thursday 12th February at 7.00pm in the school hall. Notices for you to request an interview time will be sent home with your child next week. The class teacher is the first point of contact should you have any issues or anything you need to discuss relating to your child’s schooling.

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Thank you
I would like to thank members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee for the additional maintenance work that they have undertaken during the break to ensure that all was in readiness for the start of the school year. Thank you in particular to Mr Jim Economides who has overseen the arrangement and construction of our new school fence on Barloa Road, which is very near completion and Mr Barry Stuart who has spent many hours completing various handyman and gardening maintenance jobs around the school. Mrs Donna Cannock has also spent many hours coordinating uniform shop orders. Thank you Donna for your availability, flexible approach, and superb organisation.

Uniform
It is an expectation that all students wear school uniform. Its purpose is to promote a sense of pride, equal status and belonging amongst the students at Mont Albert. Please note our school uniform does not include bike shorts, coloured shorts, running shorts, basketball shorts, black leggings or hoodies. It is also an expectation that jewellery is kept to a minimum. All staff appreciate your cooperation. Uniform items are purchased via an order form available online via the school website.

Sunsmart Hats
A reminder that students must wear a school uniform brimmed or legionnaire hat until the end of April which covers all of Term 1 and the commencement of Term 2. Students who do not have a hat during recess and lunch breaks will be required to sit outside Room 11 or the PAC.

Mobile Phones
The number of students who have mobile phones and bring them to school is on the increase. It is not appropriate for students to use a mobile phone whilst at school, either in the classroom or the playground. Please discuss this issue with your child’s classroom teacher if you feel it is a necessity for your child to bring a mobile phone to school.

Supervision
From time to time we need to make mention of playground supervision arrangements.

During the school day a minimum of four staff are on duty at recess and lunchtimes in designated areas. Teachers are also on duty in the playground from 8.45am each morning and in the afternoon until 3.45pm.

Children who are in the playground outside these times are unsupervised and potentially at risk. There have been instances in the past where some students, after being picked up by parents continue to play in the school ground. I would like to remind parents that once you have collected your child from school then you have a ‘duty of care’ and a responsibility to supervise their activity.

The role of teachers on duty, particularly after school, is to ensure that all students have been picked up appropriately and to oversee a smooth exit from the school. It is not their responsibility to supervise after school activities.

I am looking forward with great anticipation to the many opportunities that will present themselves in the year ahead and wish every family the very best. I encourage you to access and read carefully the weekly Bulletin which is available on our website and in hard copy upon request, as it is a pivotal way in which I and other staff can communicate the many happenings of what occurs on a weekly basis to you so that you are kept up to date and informed. If you have a query or issue you wish to discuss never hesitate to make an appointment to chat with the appropriate staff member or myself; often in doing so such queries can be answered effectively and with just cause in a constructive and objective manner.

Sharon Saitlik
Principal

AN URGENT REMINDER
Families, if your children suffer from any health concern requiring medication, it is important to supply any school-hour medication to First Aid, accompanied by detailed instructions.

EPIPENS
A couple of our anaphylactic students do not yet have their Epipens returned/supplied to school. Please send/return this to the School Office immediately.

NEW DIAGNOSES
A reminder to all families that if your child becomes newly diagnosed with a medical condition, please ensure you inform both your child’s teacher and First Aid.

Mel and Alison
First Aid Team

FIRST AID NEWS

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