PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

On top of teachers’ normal workload, we are lucky enough to have a significant number of teachers taking on extra responsibilities in order to make positive changes for our school and our school programs. This year, we have active project teams in the following areas:

1. Curriculum
2. Assessment and reporting
3. Information and communication technologies (ICT)
4. Creative arts
5. Playground
6. Student wellbeing
7. Environmental education
8. Engaging the community
9. Gifted and talented students

This week, I have had or will have the pleasure of meeting with each of these project teams to discuss their priorities for 2016. At these meetings, we looked at the change management cycle which includes: building a case for change, building commitment among the team and other key stakeholders, action planning and evaluating. Given that it is the beginning of a new school year or that three of these teams are only just setting up, we have reverted to the “building a case for change” part of the cycle. In this stage, each team is required to gather evidence about the current situation in our school regarding their project area, to complete a best practice scan including looking at current research and practices in other schools, defining some choices for actions and making recommendations for change, all with the underlying question of “How will this make a difference to our students?” In effect, each team may approach you or your child to seek your opinion on what you think about our current approach to each of these areas, to ask you for ways that we could improve or to determine whether or not you support a recommended change or goal.

With this approach, we have seen enormous changes behind the scenes in the last 18 months. For example, there has been a huge improvement in our school culture (e.g. the way our teachers collaborate and support each other with curriculum). This is our first strategic direction in our 2015-2017 School Plan. However, we are hoping to make our hard work and improvements more noticeable to you and our wider community within the next 12 months.

If you have any questions or concerns about these projects, please feel free to contact me to discuss them further. Likewise, if you would like to provide any information, observations or feedback directly to me, I’m happy to listen.

Have a great week.

Helen Empacher
Principal

---

Easter Hat Parade

Our annual Easter Hat Parade is coming up on 24th March 2015.
Get out the craft paper and glue sticks and get creative!
Flowery hats, Easter bunny hats and hats from traditional costumes. We look forward to seeing them all!

---

Hot day hosing!
This term in 5M, students are learning about cultures around the world in our integrated unit “We Are One, We Are Many”. 5M are currently reading the book Sadako and The Thousand Paper Cranes. This book introduces the themes of peace and war. The book also introduces origami as a type of traditional Japanese art. Students have researched Japanese culture and represented elements of this in their artworks. Students spent one lesson using water colours, acrylic paint and markers to create their backgrounds. They then spent a second lesson making their origami dolls and reflecting on their artwork.
Rafa

“In my picture I chose to use a sakura tree branch to represent Japanese culture. I also drew the symbol of peace to represent a peaceful culture. The origami doll I really enjoyed making even though it was hard”.

Jazz

“Our origami lesson was a good idea because the whole class got to join in. Even though it was hard, I found it fun. I chose light colours because they make the doll stand out. I put two cherry blossom trees to symbolise Japan. I used pastel blue for the background and light pink for the cherry blossoms. It was really fun to create!”

Ryan

“I chose to paint mountains to be original because no one else had done it – I think it makes it look good! These mountains represent Mt Fuji in Japan. My Japanese symbols mean peace. Making the origami doll was really hard but I liked decorating him. Personally I thought it was lots of fun”.

James

“I thought the origami doll was fun but also a little bit hard. To create my background I mixed white to create light colours and a bit of water to mix them. When painting the cherry blossom tree I used small brush strokes for the effect. My red gate represents traditional temple gates. The Japanese symbol means peace.”
Our solar (sun) Planets closer to the sun system is a have shorter years but those small part of further away have longer the far bigger years.
Milky Way galaxy (star Do you want to ask Bryon a system). question? Write your question and give it to Ms. Karanikolas.

The sun is at the centre of the solar system. It is by far the largest object in the solar system.

The planets move around the sun. A planet's path around the sun is called its orbit. Once around the sun is called a year but years are different from one planet to the next.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANET</th>
<th>HOW MANY DAYS IN 1 YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>88 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>225 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>687 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>4,333 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neptune</td>
<td>60,182 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2015, Mascot Public School was involved in a special reading project run with the assistance of student teachers from Sydney University. Due to the success of this program, the school is running its own version in 2016.

As a result, we are seeking parent and community volunteers to assist in supporting this important teacher-based program which involves:

- Improving children's knowledge of the link between letters and sounds.
- Training children to look for specific smaller words and word segments within larger words.
- Working on comprehension skills.
- Developing children's spelling through recognising the sound units contained in words.

An information meeting will be held in the library on Monday, 7th March 2016. The meeting will commence at 6:00pm and you are warmly invited to attend and find out more about this valuable program.

We look forward to seeing you there.

On the 25th of February, some students represented Mascot Public School in the Zone Swimming Carnival at Botany Pools. It was a humid day and even though they were restless, they tried their best.

Our senior boys relay team came 4th out of all the heats. We had a few people in the finals that did extremely well.

There was a lot of cheering and supporting in the stands. Everyone cooperated well. We all congratulated those who participated in the races even if they did not get first place.

We all enjoyed the cool and pristine water of the pool. After a hard day of swimming, we finally had the much-wanted sensation to relax in the bus. Once we arrived at school we were welcomed by our fellow students.

We are very thankful to have Mrs Gale and Miss Ellis. They gave up their time to take us to the pools and to hear our complaints about the heat. They gave us the opportunity to show the community our swimming skills.

By Angona, Christian and Filip (Year 6)
National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy 2016

LETTER TO PARENTS

In May 2016 the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) will be completed by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN has the support of all State and Territory Education Ministers and will assess the literacy and numeracy skills of students across Australian schools.

The results of the tests will provide important information to schools about what each student can do, and will be used to support teaching and learning programs. Parents will receive a report indicating their child's level of achievement. Each student's level of achievement will be reported against the national minimum standard.

Student background information (student name, gender, date of birth, language background and Aboriginality) will be collected as part of the National Assessment Program. This information is treated confidentially and held securely to ensure that every student's right to privacy is maintained.

The NAPLAN tests will be conducted from 10-12 May 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUESDAY 10 MAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY 11 MAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY 12 MAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Language Conventions  
(Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) | Reading | Numeracy |
| Writing |

In the Numeracy tests students do not require any measuring tools such as rulers or protractors. In Years 7 and 9 there will be two Numeracy tests: one where a calculator is allowed and one where calculators are not to be used. For the calculator test, the student should use the calculator that they currently use at school.

Friday 13 May – A 'catch-up' day is scheduled for students who missed a test or were absent on a test day.

Students may be considered for exemption from the tests if they:

- are newly arrived in Australia (less than one year before the test) and with a language background other than English, or
- have significant intellectual disability and/or significant co-existing conditions which severely limit their capacity to participate in the tests.

All other students are expected to participate in the tests. Disability adjustments which reflect the student's normal level of support in the classroom may be provided. Large print, Braille, coloured paper versions and electronic tests are available to meet the needs of individual students.

Access to disability adjustments or exemption from the tests must be discussed with the school principal and a parent or carer consent form must be signed.

Students may be withdrawn from NAPLAN by their parent or carer. This is a matter for consideration by parents in consultation with the school principal. If you wish to withdraw your child from the tests, a parent or carer consent form must be signed.

Please make an appointment with the principal of the school your child attends if you would like to discuss your child's participation in NAPLAN.

Additional information about NAPLAN can be found at [www.nap.edu.au/NAPLAN/Parent_Carer_support/index.html](http://www.nap.edu.au/NAPLAN/Parent_Carer_support/index.html)
Government High School Information

Year 6 students have received an Expression of Interest form for placement in Year 7, 2016 for government high schools. These forms are due back at school by Friday 18 March 2016. Every student needs to return this form by this due date regardless of whether or not your child is attending a government high school. Mascot Public School will send your completed form to the high school of your choice and once a decision has been made, the high school will write directly to you. If your application is successful they will arrange for the transfer of your child’s details to them. You may be asked to make an appointment with the high school to discuss the next steps.

Please contact Ms Andreu if you are having difficulty in completing the form.

Selective High School Test for Year 7, 2016
Applicants for Year 7 placement in a selective high school in 2017 are required to take the Selective High School Placement Test to be held from 9.00 am to 1.30 pm on Thursday 10 March 2016.

The test centre for students from our school is:
J J Cahill Memorial High School
Sutherland St
Mascot NSW 2020

Students must bring their Test authority letter or email to the test centre on the day of the test

All parents were sent a copy of a document called, Test Information for Parents and Students. Please refer to this as it outlines information about what to expect on the day, what students need to bring and other relevant information.

Please contact Ms Andreu if you have any concerns.

WINTER UNIFORM
Order forms and price lists are available from the office or from Mrs Steel in the uniform shop.

All orders need to be placed NOW so we have items before the cold weather arrives. (Remember, embroidery of the school logo on items of clothing takes longer).

- Girls winter tunics
- Navy, fleece jackets and navy track pants to match.
- Microfibre jackets and track pants to match.
- Navy long tailored pants.
- Scarf/beanie set.

ORDER NOW! Don’t wait for winter to arrive. Items may not be available in all sizes after orders have been delivered.

J J Cahill Memorial High School
Sutherland St Mascot 02 9669 5118

School Open Afternoon

Tuesday 1st March 2016
12.00pm – 4.00pm

Guided tours and subject based activities.

View our facilities and engage in terrific learning experiences here at JJ.

Discuss enrolment vacancies for 2017.

Learn more about our successful teaching and specialised learning programs. Meet our dedicated staff and students.

J J Cahill MHS – a true community school.

Our School Council

The School Council is comprised of:
- 4 elected parents (Heather Marshall, Tanvir Khan, Jessica Welch and Penny Hatzis)
- 4 elected staff members (Mrs Freeman, Mr Metcalfe, Ms Cain and Ms Karanikolas)
- a P&C representative (Phillip Carabitsios)
- our school principal (automatic inclusion).

The School Council:
- is responsible for setting the goals and the directions that a school will take in the future;
- works out what the school needs and what are the most important matters for the school to focus on;
- assesses the school’s financial needs;
- gives the Principal advice on many matters such as how well the school is reporting the students’ achievements to parents or about the welfare of the students in the school; and
- is not responsible for managing the school or choosing the teaching and learning programs taught in the school.

We have held our first meeting for 2016 already with our next meeting scheduled for the 5th of April. At this meeting, we discussed the School Council’s constitution, the school’s financial position following the end of the 2015 financial year and the budget focus for 2016. We were unable to elect our president and secretary so will carry this motion over to the next meeting.

If you would like any member of the Council to raise an item at the next meeting, please see any one of them prior so that it can be added to the agenda.