Thursday, 6 October 2016

Dates to remember
17th October - Pupil Free Day Monday
20th October - Regional Principal Meeting
24th - 25th October – Cluster Music Camp
28th October - Assembly – monthly pennants
31st - 4th Nov (week 5) – Swimming Lessons
7th - 11th Nov (week 6) – Swimming Lessons
29th Nov - Year 6 Transition to High School
29th Nov - Year 6 Graduation
6th December – Concert/Presentation Night

Principal News
Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to Term 4, 2016. I hope you all had a relaxing family-focused holiday. Term 3 was a long term and at the end of it we had some very tired students and staff. I know it was timely that we had the holidays to enable everyone to reclaim their school and work mojo. Term 4 is also a long 10 week term with school finishing on Friday 9th December. That means our Grade 6s only have 9 weeks left of primary school. Now that is a bit scary for some parents and students. As daunting as it might seem, I believe our Grade 6s are well positioned to make the transition to High School in terms of academic performance, social mobility and being self-managed, independent learners.

Please note that Monday 17 October is a Pupil Free Day. Subsequently, there will be no school for students on that day. Our teachers will be spending the day with teachers from other cluster primary schools moderating student work. Moderation is when teachers get together and look at individual work samples so that our schools have consistency in the achievement grades they allocate to students. So this means that an A achievement rating at Mossman School is the same as an A achievement rating in all the other schools. Teachers use a proforma called a Guide to Making Judgements that is based on the Australian Curriculum and C2C (Curriculum into the Classroom) units of work. Our teachers will work with the other teachers from across the cluster to ensure they are allocating the appropriate achievement rating using the Guide to Making Judgements. Sounds exciting doesn’t it? Our teacher aides will also be involved in professional development with other teacher aides from other cluster schools. This pupil free day is a great opportunity for all staff from all our cluster schools to get together and have some serious educational debate and professional development.

Swimming lessons will take place in Week 5 and Week 6. There will be 9 lessons for each class in that 10 day period. We are still negotiating transportation with our local bus company. At this stage we are looking at 2 available options. One option is that we transport every class by bus to and from the pool. The benefit of this is that there is less time involved in getting to and from the pool. The downside is that it is expensive. A second option is that we only transport the Prep and Prep1 classes to and from the pool. The benefit is that it will reduce costs. Down side is that the other students walk to and from the pool. The cost of entering the pool is $3 per student per day which totals $27 for entry to the pool for the 9 days. Indicative rough costing for the bus is around $3.50 per student per day which brings the cost of the swimming lessons to approximately $58.50 per student. This is a lot of money for families and even more for parents with more than one child at school. At this stage we haven’t made a final decision as we are looking at alternative options. I will keep you posted of developments.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Judy Taylor for her 28 years of service to the students, parents and staff of Mossman State School. Judy
has made the wonderful decision to retire so that she can spend time with her family. I thank Judy for her outstanding contribution to the Mossman School community. She will be greatly missed but I am sure that you would all like to wish her well in the next chapter of her life. All the best Judy.

As one door closes, another door opens. As such, I would like to announce that Hannah Buchanan, our fantastic Administration Officer has now been made permanent after spending 9 years acting in this position. When I say ‘acting’ I don’t mean that she was pretending to do the job. It means she has been undertaking the duties of Administrative Officer. Hannah is a sensational addition to our school and we feel privileged to have her skills, knowledge and personality in our school. Welcome to permanency Hannah.

I would also like to announce that Mr David Budge has been formally transferred to our school from Whitfield State School. David applied for a transfer to our school as he has a strong desire and dedication to work with our students. I can’t thank David enough for requesting this transfer as he is an outstanding teacher, dedicated to the educational, social and behavioural development of our students. Dave is a wonderful addition to our staff and brings with him a wealth of experience, knowledge and insight. I am sure you will all join with me in welcoming David to our school community. Welcome David.

I would like to draw your attention to an article (see attached) from the Australian newspaper that was published on October 1st. I have included the article in which the Australian newspaper has league tabled the 50 most improved schools in Australia and yes, I mean Australia. Mossman State School was placed 49 in the most improved schools in Australia from 2014-2015. 2016 results are yet to be formalized. This is an absolutely amazing result for our school community. It surely indicates that our teachers, teacher aides, students and parents are putting the right energy into the right places. Academic achievement is up, academic improvement is in the top 50 schools in Australia, daily attendance is growing every day, staff morale is great, community spirit is alive and well, break-ins/vandalism down to levels never seen before and public perception of our school is positively changing. Mossman State School is a great place to be. Welcome back to Term 4.
The many ingredients of improved results

What goes into creating a successful school that punches above its weight? There is no one-size-fits-all model; no magic formula. The ingredients will always include resourcing, talented teachers, a strong sense of community, dedicated students and committed parents. But what works for one school may not be right for another just down the road.

Principals, teachers, students and parents who set out to tackle the literacy and numeracy challenge early are best placed to reap rewards.

The Weekend Australian's annual Your School report highlights the achievements of students and teachers in schools that scored the highest results in the national literacy and numeracy tests.

The emphasis on achieving improved results has never been more important as federal, state and territory leaders begin negotiations for a new schools funding arrangement to begin in 2018, against a backdrop of slipping national academic performance.

Well-funded schools with great teachers will always do well. But Your School underscores that government and low-fee independent schools are also achieving success by working to overcome limited resources and, in some cases, disadvantage by implementing innovative strategies to provide the best foundations for children.

The Weekend Australian also updates its interactive Your School website today, online at www.theaustralian.com.au/ yourschool. The website, which continues to grow in popularity, can assist parents looking for the school that best fits their child's needs. It overcomes some of the restrictions on the Australian Curriculum,

What works for one school may not be right for another just down the road.

Assessment and Reporting Authority website My School, which permits direct comparisons only between schools with similar demographics. Your School lets parents compare the performances of any schools they choose.

The National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy tests capture a point in time, examining the performance of students across three days a year. NAPLAN doesn't paint the full picture of what goes into a quality education, but it does serve as an important diagnostic tool to ensure Australian students are on track to become the best they can be.

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

• Your School data is based on the results of the 2015 National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy, known as NAPLAN, published by the My School website and conducted by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority.

• Each year ACARA tests students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

• An aggregate score has been calculated for each school based on results in reading, writing and numeracy for Years 3 and 5 for primary schools and Years 7 and 9 for high schools.

• ACARA refuses to provide data, so the information has been collected directly from the My School website by big data intelligence specialists Protogen Technologies. Due to the volatility of results from schools with small numbers, primary schools with less than 100 students, secondary schools with less than 200 and combined schools with less than 300 have been excluded except for the most improved school lists, as they show results across three years, and tables on the top indigenous schools.