FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Concerns arise at schools for a variety of reasons. Schools are very busy places – there are lots of things that happen and there are many decisions made every day. At the same time, the school community is quite diverse, with many individuals or groups having vastly different opinions on how things should be done.

It is inevitable therefore, that times will arise when some parents agree with the school’s actions while others disagree and wish to discuss the matter and seek clarification with the school. We welcome such discussions and encourage parents to raise issues so that they can be dealt with speedily and resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned. This is where effective communication can make all the difference.

“Communication is a 2 way street”.

I have endeavoured to increase the communication between home and the school by implementing school progress reports weekly and making myself available at suitable times for any discussion. I also try to farewell the students of an afternoon giving you an opportunity to talk to me about any concerns. I have also been open and honest to you as parents and put forward any concerns or affirmations that I have had with your children either regarding behaviour or their learning. The school newsletter is uploaded to our school website: www.warrass.eq.edu.au each week, as well as being updated then with coming events and other stories.

Successful communication will only work if you express your concerns to the school, not talk about them in the school community and ‘keep them hidden’. This also relies on you returning letters, notes and progress reports in a timely fashion to enable the smooth running of the school. As well, please remember that phone etiquette is a part of a valuable communication process.

Raising concerns or seeking clarification is not a negative experience if everyone focuses on it being a solution-focused experience by valuing everyone’s opinions.

Please ensure that you are doing what you can to enable this, as it will only lead to a more positive school experience for your children.

Communication works for those who work at it.
John Powell

There are some photos below of some of the science experiments which have been performed over the last week. P-2 looked at landforms and 5-7 examined convection currents and how hot and cold air/water react.

Rainforest example

Convection current experiment

Judy Angel

PROGRESS REPORTS

As mentioned above, the success of the progress reports relies on the timely return of these and that all of the report is intact. I have also included any work that the students do on the computer, which comprises results from any programs that they may use in the course of completing or revising work. Some of these are online and as such, we can access a record of what they have done.

As you would realise, this is part of the monitoring of the students’ work and progress. In any work completed at school, there is a monitoring and recording process.

We need this process to enable an informed judgement on how students are working and for the end of semester result.
Independent Public Schools

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Independent Public Schools will continue to be a part of our strong state schooling system, adhering to the same values and having access to all support structures that all state schools in Queensland enjoy.

This is not about creating a tiered system within our state schools, but rather extending the autonomy in decision making, cutting red tape and removing layers of management to improve outcomes for students. I will be ensuring that the successful Independent Public Schools are able to utilise increased autonomy to drive improved student outcomes and represent a cross-section of the wide range of schools throughout Queensland.

Student of the Week
Student of the Week has been awarded to Hayden Taylor.

Our school rule awards are:
- Respect for Yourself – Hamish Cox
- Respect for Other Students and Staff – Kati Wright

Congratulations to Hayden, Hamish and Kati on receiving their awards.

P&C
We are holding our Family Film Night this Saturday 1 September at the Warra Memorial Hall from 5.30pm. Should you be able to assist with the running of the evening it would be much appreciated.

Supper will be provided following the movie. Please bring a slice to serve with tea and coffee. Thanks.

TUCKSHOP
Tuckshop will be available this Friday 31st August. Dagwood Dogs (small) and poppers are $1.00 each.

BER (LIBRARY OPENING)
As I have stated in previous newsletters, there has not been any decision on an opening date. We do have to wait for the decision from the Federal Government as the funding originated from their initiative.

TENNIS FEES
Just a reminder that some fees are still outstanding.

PREP ENROLMENTS
Warra State School is now taking enrolments for Prep 2013. If your child turns 5 by June 30th, 2013, they are eligible to commence prep next year. If your child is born between 1st July 2007 and 30th June 2008, please drop into our office to collect an enrolment pack.

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Independent Public Schools will continue to be a part of our strong state schooling system, adhering to the same core values and having access to all support structures that all state schools in Queensland enjoy.

While Independent Public Schools will be able to recruit teachers to existing vacancies without going through departmental processes, they will have to follow open merit processes. They will still have the opportunity to use the current recruitment and transfer systems if that better suits their needs. Independent Public Schools will be no different to other state schools in regard to following departmental processes for managing performance of staff.

I am highly conscious of the vital role our transfer system plays for our Queensland state schools. I can assure you that the transfer system will be retained and strengthened to ensure that high quality teachers are available in schools across Queensland, including rural, remote and isolated schools. Teachers in Independent Public Schools will continue to play a part in this system.

There has been some concern that Independent Public Schools will opt to employ teachers on lower salary levels. I wish to assure you the salary of the teacher will not drive appointments. Independent Public Schools will not manage the actual human resources salary budget but will manage the position.

Funding and charges
Independent Public Schools will receive a one-off $50 000 grant to assist with their transition and then will receive a further $50 000 in funding each year for the life of the initiative. This should be considered ‘seed funding’, an opportunity to put systems and practices in place that grow an innovation culture.

The cost of education in an Independent Public School will not be passed on to parents any differently to how they are charged now. While Independent Public Schools will be able to charge a fee for providing a specialised program, for instance, these processes will be no different to any other state school.

Performance agreement
An important part of the Independent Public Schools initiative is the performance agreement I form with principals of participating schools. I see this agreement as a valuable opportunity to talk through the school’s priorities with the principal with a focus on monitoring and improving performance.

I would like to make it clear that these performance reviews are in no way designed as mechanisms to determine future funding payments but are instead an opportunity to identify areas where additional support may be provided.

We know from the research that there needs to be a balance between autonomy and accountability. I believe we have this balance right and our focus will always remain on the best outcomes for students.

I encourage you to keep talking with each other and your broader school community about the potential this initiative might hold for your school.

If you have further questions, I encourage you to read through the FAQs or send through your query to IPS@dete.qld.gov.au.

Regards
Julie Grantham
Director-General
Department of Education, Training and Employment
QSR (QUADRENNIAL SCHOOL REVIEW)
Please find attached a survey for you to fill out regarding our Quadrennial School Review which will take place this term and term 4. This is to enable the school to plan for the future years. Thank you for your participation. The surveys will need to be returned by: 7 September, 2012.

2012 CHILDREN’S BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS
The winners of the Children’s Book Council of Australia 2012 Book of the Year Awards have been announced.

The Book of the Year Award for Older Readers went to Scot Gardner for his book *The Dead I Know* while Cate Constable took out the Book of the Year: Younger Readers Award for *Crow Country*.

Nick Bland was awarded the Early Childhood Award for his *The Runaway Hug* and the Picture Book of the Year Award went to Bob Graham, for *A Bus called Heaven*.

Full details on the winners and runners up in each of the award categories can be found at the website [www.cbca.org.au/winners_2012.htm](http://www.cbca.org.au/winners_2012.htm)

COMMUNITY NOTICES
Warra markets will be held on Saturday 8 September from 8am to 12 noon at the Warra Memorial Hall.

A public meeting will be held to discuss forming a Little Athletics Centre in Chinchilla on Friday 7 September from 7pm at the Chinchilla RSL. All members of the community are welcome and encouraged to attend.

For further information contact the Association office on 1300 559 436.

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