Dear Barrack Heights School Community,

Welcome back everyone!

It was lovely to walk around the school this morning and see all of our students returning to school with big, happy smiles on their faces! I’m sure those smiles were also on the faces of parents and carers who are happy to have their children back at school!

Term 2 is always a busy time, as teachers prepare to report to you on your children’s progress during the first half of the year. This is made more difficult, but the shorter time in which we have to prepare (this is only a nine week term!). In addition to this, we have a number of other experiences filling our term, including NAPLAN tests for students in Years 3 and 5 (Week 3); District and Regional X-Country and school Athletics Carnivals; excursions and overnight camps; University Competitions in computers, writing, spelling and science; Public Education Day; In2Uni (Year 6); and NAIDOC Week celebrations! Phew – what a rush!

Staff changes and a sad farewell!

It is with sadness that we farewelled our Senior Administration Manager, Mrs Glenda Grimshaw last Term. Glenda has finally reached her retirement, and will be sorely missed by the staff and students at our school. Glenda has worked at Barrack Heights Public School for the last 22 years! Glenda is currently travelling in Europe and having a wonderful time. Mrs Paula Cavanough will be the relieving Administration manager for the next two weeks. Welcome Paula!

As you should be aware, our school has been included in the Early Action for Success reform, targeting Professional Learning and support to our Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 teachers. Mrs Jo Collins has been selected by merit to provide this support as our Instructional Leader. Mrs Collins comes to us from Callala Public School, where she is currently teaching a Kindergarten class. During Jo’s career, she has been an Assistant Principal, Highly Accomplished Teacher, relieving Principal and Regional Consultant. She has expertise in teaching Literacy and Numeracy, and training teachers in methodologies and programs that give the greatest results. We warmly welcome Jo to our Barrack Heights school community.

A clever (and talented) kid!

During the school holidays one of our Year 6 students, Rhiannon T, was selected as a member of the NSW PSSA Girls Cricket Team. This is an amazing achievement, and will mean that Rhiannon will travel to the Northern Territory later in the term, to compete in the Australian Championships. Rhiannon is selling raffle tickets to raise money for the expenses associated with being a member of this team. They cost $2 each, with prizes including a Laptop Notebook, LED TV, and three Ipod Shuffle’s. If you would like to purchase a ticket or tickets, please send your money in a labelled envelope the office and we will return your tickets immediately. Thank you!
**District X Country**
This Thursday, 80 Barrack Heights Public School students will compete in the District X Country carnival at Blackbutt Reserve. All children need to have returned their permission note and money to Mr Ellsmore by tomorrow (Wednesday) 30th April to attend. We wish all of our students the best of luck!

**Congratulations to our P&C President**
During the school holidays, our P&C President Lisa Simmons gave birth to a beautiful baby boy – Jacob. On behalf of the entire School Community, I would like to congratulate both Lisa and her husband Chris on the birth of their son.

**ANZAC Assembly**
On Friday, our Parliamentary Leadership team will conduct an ANZAC Commemoration Assembly around our flagpoles. Students who would like to bring a floral tribute or wear some rosmary are most welcome to do this on Friday.

**Communicating with your child’s teacher**
I would like to encourage all parents to maintain contact with their child’s class teacher – either by email, phone, letter or appointment/interview. Due to new changes in education, all teachers are required to create adjusted learning plans/programs for their students. Teachers will use these to inform teaching and learning, and are required to discuss these adjustments with you. Our Learning and Support Team, led by Mrs Jenny Miller, is assisting teachers with these new protocols. By the end of Term 2, all teachers will report to you via our usual Semester 1 report, but they may also ask you to come for an interview. You may also request an interview with your child’s teacher at any time. Your child’s educational success is a team effort – and we must all work together to make this happen. Remember, communication don’t just have to be due to a concern. Teachers LOVE good news stories – so if you have one, please pass it on!

**Excursions and alternate learning experiences**
This year, we have made a conscious decision to engage our students with a wide variety of “life learning” experiences. As you would be aware, so far this year, this has included a whole school (Yrs 3-6) swimming carnival, International Women’s Day morning tea with guest speakers, Kids Helpline incursion, Surf Safety talks and practical (beach) sessions, photography workshops, Young Leaders conference RSPCA talks, overnight excursions to Sydney and Killilea, and a Kinder Picnic in the Park. In addition to this, our weekly Club activities give Barrack Heights students opportunities to explore learning in a different (hands on) way. These opportunities can be expensive, and that is why the school is subsidising many of these experiences. **PLEASE SUPPORT US by encouraging your child to attend and returning notes and money on time!** Most excursions we attend do not offer refunds or allow us to adjust numbers at the last minute. It is a shame to waste money on non attenders – rather than using it for another experience!

**Family Services Illawarra**
During Term 2, Family Services Illawarra will hold a free 6 week program for parents called “Bringing Up Great Kids”. The program promotes positive, respectful parent and child relationships. The program begins on Friday 9th May and continues for 5 weeks after this date. There is free childminding available! After completing the program, parents will be better equipped to:

- Understand the origin and nature of their parenting style
- Understand the messages they give to, and receive from, their children
- Identify and respond to the needs of their children
- Build a positive, respectful relationship with their child
- Source information and support for themselves in their parenting role

If you are interested in attending this program, please call Family Services Illawarra on 4255 5333, or leave your name with Mrs Mullin, Mrs Cavanough or Mrs De La Torre at the front office.

Sarah Rudling
Principal