Parents, Carers and Community members,

Staff Changes – typo error
Last week, I mentioned some significant changes to our staff for Term 2. Unfortunately, I wrote that Mrs Munro would be teaching 1/2E for the remainder of the Term – this should have read 1/2S. My apologies for any confusion!

School Lockdown and Evacuation Procedures
It has been brought to my attention that last week’s Practice Lockdown Drills caused some concern amongst parents and carers. It is a requirement of the Work Health and Safety Directorate of the Department of Education and Communities that all Public Schools practice both Evacuation and Lockdown drills at least every six months. Your full support of these drills is necessary to ensure that our students are educated and prepared in case of a real emergency situation. As always, if you have questions or concerns about events at our school, please ask our staff for clarification. They will be able to provide you with informed and accurate information.

Semester One Reports and Parent/Teacher Interviews
All of our teachers are currently writing Semester One reports. These reports will give parents and carers information regarding their children’s academic achievements and social skill development during the first half of the year. Teachers use a variety of assessment tools, as well as professional judgement, to construct these reports. They take many long hours to create, and we appreciate your interest in them. I would like to encourage all parents to engage with their child’s teacher during parent/teacher interview evening, to be held during Weeks 8 and 9 of this Term. Teachers will send home notes for you to request appropriate times for these interviews in the coming weeks.
Champion Runner
Congratulations to Ruby Mc who came 1st in her age group at the Mid South Coast Cross Country Carnival on Friday. Ruby is now representing our school and the Region at the State Carnival at Eastern Creek in Week 1 next term. This is an amazing achievement, and we are very proud of Ruby’s efforts!

World Environment Day – Green Mufti Day
World Environment Day (WED) is the United Nations’ principal vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Over the years it has grown to be a broad, global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated by stakeholders in over 100 countries. It also serves as the ‘people's day’ for doing something positive for the environment, galvanizing individual actions into a collective power that generates an exponential positive impact on the planet. The Barrack Heights PS Ministers for the Environment, Poppi R and Aaron P have decided to bring attention to World Environment Day by planting some native trees in our garden and asking all students to wear green this Thursday, 5th June. There will be a presentation at our school assembly from the Parliament to the school, and a special planting ceremony on Friday.

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on school students with disability – 2014
Our school is participating in the collection of nationally consistent data on school students with disability. We will be collecting information already available in the school about the support that is being provided to students with disability. Better data will help the Government plan for students with disability.

The data collection will have no direct impact on your child and they will not be involved in any testing process. The NSW Department of Education and Communities will provide data to the Australian Government from all NSW public schools in such a way that no individual student or school will be able to be identified. In this way, we will ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all students. All information is protected by privacy laws which regulate the collection, storage and disclosure of personal information.

Information about the Australian Government’s Privacy Policy can be found at: http://education.gov.au/condensed-privacy-policy. Information about the NSW Government’s privacy policies can be found at: http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/ If you do not want your child to be counted in the data collection, please contact Mrs Jenny Miller at the school. A decision to exclude your child will not affect the support they currently receive. Further information about the data collection can be found on the Australian Government Department of Education website: http://education.gov.au/nationally-consistent-collection-data-school-students-disability. I have also included a fact sheet at the end of this weeks newsletter. If you have any questions about your child being included in the data collection please contact the school.

Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition
On Thursday, Zac B and Cleo D will be representing our school in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition at Mount Terry Public School. Both students have to present a prepared speech on “The Meaning of Australia Day”. They then will have to give an impromptu speech on a topic given to them on the day. Both speeches are scored and then winners announced. Winners will move onto the next level of competition. Good luck Cleo and Zac!

Combined Principals Network Conference
Last Friday, I attended a conference for Principals from Wollongong North, Wollongong and South Coast Networks to hear from our Deputy Secretary, Schools – Mr Greg Prior. Mr Prior is the Deputy to the Director General of Education - Michele Bruniges. Mr Prior spoke at length about the position of Australia in the Global Education Reform Movement, and the responsibility of schools to meet the demands of the most significant changes to education in NSW ever. There are currently 12 significant Reform Agendas being rolled out across NSW, including Early Action for Success; Every Student Every School; Australian Curriculum; Australian Principal and Teacher Standards; and Empowering Local Schools to name a few. I encourage you to do your own research on these Reforms by visiting the NSW Department of Education and Communities website so that you can understand and support the strategic directions and decisions our school will need to make in the near future.
Talking Tactics Together' Drug Education Program
The children in 5/6H, 5/6W and Year 6 in 3/6B and 3/6D have been engaged in a Drug Education Program at school called ‘Talking Tactics Together’. The program provides children with information and skills to help them make informed life choices. As ‘Talking Tactics Together’ is an interactive family drug education program, the children will be presenting a range of fun, interactive drug education activities, this Tuesday evening, to their family members. This is a fun way to engage and communicate with your child about their learning at school. The evening will provide an opportunity for families to participate in a range of drug education activities. Open communication with parents is an essential element in helping to reduce young people’s substance use and can protect them from difficult life events. Research has found, and young people agreed that, 'for parents to have maximum influence on young people, they need to discuss issues in an open and balanced way and start during the early school years'. The children, as presenters, and staff strongly encourage family members to attend. A light supper will be provided on the night.

When: Tuesday, 3rd June
Time: 6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.
Where: School Hall
Mrs Woods (Health Education Officer Illawarra Shoalhaven ), Mrs Wheeler, Mrs Harris

Parenting Ideas - Membership
Our School P&C have purchased a year’s subscription to the Parenting Ideas magazine. Parentingideas is Australia’s leading provider of parenting education resources to schools. They offer an extensive range of learning resources to parents, articles and up-to-date content for school newsletters, as well as professional development for teachers and parents. If you would like to see more, please go to: www.parentingideas.com.au and follow the instructions in the parents section. You can download the Parenting Ideas Magazine here as well. Additional information will be included in our weekly newsletter – this week look for the article on “Helping kids leapfrog their difficulties”.

Have a good week!
Sarah Rudling
Principal

Community News
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN YOUR CHILDREN LEARNING MACEDONIAN CULTURAL DANCE AND EDUCATION CLASSES then bring them along and join our friendly environment, have fun and celebrate with us our 32 year anniversary. We offer the first two weeks as a FREE TRIAL.

Where: Flinders Public School, Adam Murray Way, FLINDERS
When: Every Tuesday
Time: 6pm to 8pm
Contact: Silvana on 0421 179 601 for further details or you can drop in and trial our classes.
Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

A parent’s attitude to their child’s difficulties will determine how successfully they meet and overcome many of the obstacles and hurdles they meet.

Whether it’s going to school for the first time, making new friends or even going to school camp, children often experience difficulties that they need to overcome.

When children overcome problems and deal with unpleasant situations they learn they are capable, which is the basis of self-esteem and confidence.

Children’s resilience is fostered when they overcome problems and manage unpleasant social situations such as teasing or going into new situations. Protecting kids from challenging experiences robs them of chances to learn, develop and grow.

Resilient kids look back and draw on skills and understandings they have developed in the past to help them deal with present challenges. For instance, a sixteen year old girl recently revealed how her time spent on a twelve-day adventure camp helped her overcome the homesickness she experienced on a six-month student exchange.

She remembered how on the first day of her school camp she didn’t think she could make it – but she did. She experienced those same doubts early in her exchange but she knew that just as she had coped before she would do so again, but this time in more difficult circumstances. She was drawing on the same resources.

Here are five great parenting ideas to help your kids leapfrog their difficulties:

1. Frame the problem as a challenge:
   Frame the difficulty as a challenge rather than a problem. Kids take their cues from their parents so the frame of ‘challenge’ gives kids something to rise to rather than be overwhelmed by.

2. Coach kids to do well:
   Talk kids through their challenges, give them ideas to cope and manage. Consider rehearsing some skills or language that they may need.

3. Show confidence they will succeed:
   Children generally meet their parents’ expectations so make sure your expectations are realistic, positive and supportive of their feelings.

4. Give kids a chance:
   Allow kids to approach challenges in their own way without constantly checking on them. Your nervousness is definitely catching.

5. Celebrate their success:
   Even if they were partially successful, such as they went to school camp for two out of the three days, then praise their efforts. They’ve got a great building block for next time.

The attitude and approach of parents and teachers will determine how successfully children and young people meet and overcome many of the hurdles they encounter. That attitude needs to be courageous, sensitive and hopeful that your child will meet, and overcome with assistance, all the challenges they encounter.