PRINCIPAL’S CONFERENCE

Last Thursday and Friday I attended the State Principal’s Conference in Brisbane. At the conference there were a number of guest speakers from across the globe who were sharing the latest information and research associated with teaching.

The overarching theme to the conference was – “Good to Great to Innovate.” This theme ran true with what we are working hard to achieve at Mackay North State School.

Remember - you have children who are capable of achieving greatness with their education, but they cannot do this alone.

You have to help them, encourage them and support them to always do their best at school.

A simple strategy to achieve this is called “2 Stars and a Wish,” which means - give your children two forms of praise + a helpful hint eg – when you are listening to your child read their home reader each evening – praise them using this type of strategy. “The way you sounded out those difficult words was fantastic and I liked the way you used your voice to make the story more exciting. Next time we read remember to have a pause when you see a full stop.”

The way you sounded out those difficult words was fantastic and I liked the way you used your voice to make the story more interesting. Next time we read remember to have a pause when you see a full stop.
WELCOME BACK DANCE
This Thursday we will try again to have our Welcome Back Dance for 2015. This will be held on the basketball court and will commence at 5.30pm. The P&C will be selling steak burgers, sausage on bread, soft drinks, water, chips and chocolates. Dancing will begin at 6.00pm. All students from Prep to Year 6 have been practising their dance with the physical education teacher. Students will perform their dance for parents and then invite parents to join in the dance with them. Hope to see you there with your children for a relaxed and enjoyable evening.

Please mark this on your calendar as a time to come up to the school for an enjoyable get together.

UNDERSTANDING NAPLAN
During May this year our Year 3 and 5 students will participate in the NAPLAN testing program. This test is a measure of a student’s abilities in Literacy and Numeracy against our National Curriculum. Once the test is completed test papers are sent away and marked independently. Results are then distributed to schools and parents. The results come in two forms, a banding and a scaled score. The Banding measure is a broad scale which measures where a student sits in relation to the test instrument across the nation. Each year level has different banding as shown in the diagram. Importantly though, the lowest banding for a year level represents students who are performing “Below the National Minimum Standard” and the second lowest banding represents students performing “At National Minimum Standard.” Ideally we would like to have all students performing above these two bands.

At the other end of the scale you have the two top bands for each year level. It is also interesting to note that a student performing in the top band for their year level is operating at a literacy or numeracy level two years higher than their grade level.

This year all Year 3 and 5 students have participated in a practice NAPLAN test and we have allocated them a banding. Teachers are now working with students to improve their personal knowledge with a view to them achieving well in this year’s NAPLAN. As parents you can assist your child by encouraging them to do their best in their practice for NAPLAN and to continue working hard to improve.

(Cont’d)
HELPING KIDS DEAL WITH REJECTION

By Michael Grose

One of the keys to functioning socially and emotionally is the ability to deal with disappointment and rejection.

Most children experience some type of rejection from their peers throughout childhood. One study found that even popular children were rejected about one quarter of the time when they approached children in school.

Paradoxically, children’s experience of rejection and disappointment at school is good for them, as long as it’s balanced with successful experiences too. They learn that they can cope and solve problems in their own way and that bad experiences don’t last forever.

And they learn that sadness and disappointment can be managed too, which is an important lesson to learn to take into adolescence and beyond, when life is full of ups and downs.

HELPING THEM MOVE ON

Most children recover from such rejection. They move on and form constructive, worthwhile relationships but some children need help. They often take rejection personally, blaming themselves. As a parent it is useful to challenge children’s unhelpful thinking and encourage them to look for new friendship opportunities. Parents can help children understand that rejection may happen for any number of reasons that are unrelated to them.

In the course of a school day children will meet with a number of challenges and even setbacks. They may struggle with some schoolwork. They may not do well in a test and they may not be picked for a game that they wanted to play. Children grow stronger when they overcome their difficulties. The challenge for parents is to build and maintain children’s confidence levels to help them get through the rough times.

One way to help children deal with rejection and disappointment is to talk through problems or difficulties, recognising and accepting their feelings. Talk about various scenarios, discussing possible outcomes. The age of your child will determine the amount of detail. Keep things simple and avoid burdening a younger child with concepts he or she doesn’t understand.

Your attitude as a parent can make a huge difference to how a child reacts. If you see rejection or disappointments as problems then your child will be hamstrung by this view. See them as challenges then your child, in all likelihood, will pick up your upbeat view and deal with disappointments easily. After all, confidence is catching!

TO HELP CHILDREN HANDLE REJECTION AND DISAPPOINTMENT TRY THE FOLLOWING FOUR STRATEGIES

1. **Model optimism** - Watch how you present the world to children, as they will pick up your view.

2. **Tell children how you handle disappointment and rejection** - Not only is it reassuring for children to know that their parents understand how they feel but they can learn a great deal by how their parents handle situations.

3. **Help children recognise times in the past when they bounced back from disappointment** - Help them recognise those same strategies can be used again.

4. **Laugh together** - Humour is a great coping mechanism. It helps put disappointment in perspective. It helps them understand that things will get better. They always do.

The stronger the wind the stronger the trees is the notion here. Supporting kids to handle life’s hurdles helps them to develop a lasting sense of resilience, which is essential for good mental and emotional health.
BOOK DRIVE

We are currently promoting a book drive to collect books in good order for Thangool State School, near Biloela. Thangool State School suffered extensive flooding as a result of Cyclone Marcia and lost many resources.

If you are able to make a donation of books to this very good cause, please send them to the Library where Mrs Maunder has boxes to collect them in. We will cease collection on Friday 6th March. Thank you all for the support you have given.

We would also like to send a huge “Thank you” to McAleese Transport who have offered to transport the collection of books free of charge to Thangool. This gesture is truly appreciated.

IN OUR CLASSROOMS

Prep B engaged in the shared reading of a book called “Smarty Pants” by Joy Cowley. The students made their own pair of Smarty Pants using fabric scraps. Each student then wrote thein their speech bubble on thing they could do that made them a Smarty Pants.

3W and 3/4H students attended a performance by the Safety Circus on Monday 2nd March. This performance is funded by the Mackay Regional Council to bring very important safety messages to Year 3 students in the Mackay area. CQ University Conservatorium of Music students volunteer their time to work together with Mackay Police to bring this very entertaining and informative show to eager Year 3 audiences. Students learned many safety messages including a Helmet Song and the High Five of five trusted people they can go to if they are not feeling safe or need to talk to about an issue.

(Cont’d)
BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL

For the safety of our students, our rule is no playing before or after school. This includes playing chasing, ball games and on the playground equipment.

Students are asked to sit in designated areas in the morning before school and wait quietly until their classroom is open. Once classrooms are open, students are to go into their room and organise for the day.

All students are encouraged to unpack bags, put homework, communication books, tuckshop, etc in the correct place, ensure pencils are sharp, equipment is organised, tidy trays are neat and then go on with morning tasks as set by teachers. This should be done independently with very little, if any intervention from an adult.

Organisation and independence skills are important to learn and practise.

In the afternoon students are asked to wait quietly to be picked up. Again, there is no playing, even if parents are talking. When some students play, others see this and think that it is okay for them to play as well. There are no teachers on duty to supervise play, so students playing are at risk and we ask that all students abide by the no play rule in the afternoons.

STOP, DROP AND GO

Please be considerate when using the Stop, Drop and Go area on Willis Street.

There should be no parking in this area and drivers should definitely not be leaving their vehicle.

If your child is not waiting to get into your vehicle when you enter and move along the Stop, Drop and Go area, please be polite, drive around the car park and enter the Stop, Drop and Go area again.
Every minute of every day counts when it comes to maximising learning opportunities. Is your child getting to school on time? Classes start at 8:45am so students should be entering classrooms at 8:30am to be organised for learning.

WEEK 3 ABSENCES

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The cleaners need plastic shopping bags. If you have any please leave them at the office.

If you have any to spare, please leave in the box outside Mrs Saunders’ room.

Thank you

WANTED CLEAN BOTTLES

Di Schmidt
ASD and ANXIETY

Many students with ASD experience INTENSE anxious feelings on a regular basis. A school environment today consists of a very busy curriculum, is full of choices, open ended tasks and constant changes. These factors make it an interesting, challenging and exciting environment for most students BUT for students with ASD this may create many challenges.

Most people on the autism spectrum experience difficulty with problem solving skills. This combined with a busy and fast paced environment can lead to increased feelings of anxiety and support may be required for that individual to feel confident in managing themselves successfully.

Anxiety can look like:

- Avoidance of new situations
- Preference for sameness
- Rigidity
- Social withdrawal
- Anger
- Meltdowns
- Physical symptoms including illness
- Repetitive noise, movement or sentence

Providing support does not mean SOLVING THE PROBLEM for the student, rather includes teaching the student a range of strategies that help to keep them calm. The aim is for the student to self-regulate their anxiety using a variety of ‘tools’ which need to be explicitly taught. Some of these tools may include:

Break Cards

It’s important to note that when children are feeling anxious, their ability to communicate effectively can become significantly impaired which is why we use visual cards to request a break. You can use break cards in two ways:

1. The student requests the break.
2. You give the student the card as you see anxiety rising.

BREAK CARD
I can ask for:

- Movement break
- Wall push ups
- Quiet place

BREAK CARD
I can:

- Take 10 deep breaths
- Count to 20
- Hug myself

(Cont’d)
There are a range of strategies you can use for breaks, some of which are suitable for school and some more suitable for home or other environments. Here are some to get you started:

**Sensory Breaks**
- Chewing (allowing to chew chewy tube etc)
- Quiet area
- Listening to music
- Watching liquid timer
- Humming, rocking
- Sit under a table with blanket over it
- Carry heavy books, box
- Lying under a gym mat, weighted vest etc

**Physical Breaks**
- Mini trampoline
- Rolling on large exercise ball
- Star jumps, jumping
- Push up against wall
- Walk, run

**Relaxation Breaks**
- Counting
- Breathing
- Music
- Imaginary World (some students escape into an imaginary world, this is particularly common for girls on the spectrum)

**Non Threatening Withdrawal: Diversion before Meltdown**
- Send on an errand
- Get them to do a job for you

**Solitude Suggestions**
- Safe haven
- Special interest time
- Book to read
- Sit away from group. For example: If you are on mat let them sit at a table away from group or if you are doing group work and the room is noisy send their group outside.
  - If you are lucky enough to have a small room off your classroom create a space for them to work there.

**Other Strategies**
- Toilet, drink and/or food
Remember, not all of these strategies will work for ALL students and will need to be taught to the student and practiced. Only a few may need to be taught at any given time and may not be necessary ALL of the time. Again, the ideal aim is for the student to regulate his/her anxiety and utilise the ‘tools’ as effortlessly as possible.

** Some information taken from Anxiety Tip Sheet (suelarkey.com.au) **

**FINGER GYM**

Our junior students continue to attend the Finger Gym program three mornings a week. Their enthusiasm and achievements are being captured on camera and although we submitted some photos last newsletter, we had to share some additional pictures with you this week.

Zion making patterns with shaving foam
Billy and Marcus carefully threading pasta towers

Jai, Lachlan and Tamiya threading their pasta towers. Which one is the highest?

Seth and Alicia are busy creating their tower.
Oral Language

Some of our year 1 & 2 students are participating in an ORAL LANGUAGE program each week in the SEP. This program (OLEY) takes place two afternoons per week and will run until Term 2.

What is Oral Language?

Language is predominantly made up of three areas, receptive and expressive language, as well as pragmatics.

**Expressive language** refers to the ability to express ideas, wants and needs (e.g., naming objects, using the correct words, using the correct grammar and sentence structure, retelling a story)

**Receptive language** refers to the ability to understand language (e.g., understanding words, following directions, concept (e.g., first, after, between) knowledge, understanding different types of sentences)

**Pragmatics** is the term used to describe social skills or conversational behaviours. Pragmatics includes taking turns, greeting others, understanding body language, starting a conversation, selecting appropriate conversational topics and appropriately disagreeing.

The development of oral language is crucial to a child's literacy development, including listening, speaking, reading and writing.

What is the OLEY?

The OLEY program was designed as a whole class program, which may be implemented with both small and large groups, or with individuals in prep or early years classrooms. Each session is based on an element of the Early Years Curriculum and the activities are all presented as games and other highly motivating activities.
Recently, on several occasions when we have tried to contact parents we have found that their contact details have changed.

It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that your details are kept up to date in case we need to contact you in the event of an emergency.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE ASAP IF ANY OF YOUR DETAILS HAVE CHANGED.**
CENTENARY LUNCHEON

MEET UP WITH YOUR OLD CLASSMATES AFTER ROLL CALL

SATURDAY 6TH JUNE – 12PM TO 2PM

ENTERTAINMENT BY CHILDREN FROM MACKAY NORTH SS ARTS DEPARTMENT

ONLY 150 TICKETS AVAILABLE - $35.00 PER TICKET

MONIES TO BE PAID TO MACKAY NORTH SS

DIRECT PAYMENT TO BSB 064-707 ACC NO – 0009722

EFTPOS AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE / CHEQUES ACCEPTED

NAME:.................................................. CONTACT NO:...........................................

NUMBER OF TICKETS:.......................... PAYMENT TYPE: ...........................................

TICKETS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE – PH 49400333
Price pre-publication $25 (will be $30)

Mackay north state school- Harvey Street - North Mackay 4740
P O box 3012 – North Mackay 4740


No of copies .......... @$25ea = $....................
Postage .................. @10ea = $....................

Or I would like to collect 6th June 2015

Total enclosed =$......................

Name ..............................................................................................................................
Address ...............................................................................................................................
.........................................................................................................................................PHONE............................................................

Cheques made payable to Mackay north State School –
Direct payments bsb - 064-707 Account No:00090722 Please complete and send the order form to the school.

Did you attend Mackay North State School? ..............................

What was your enrolment year? .................................................................
Mackay North SS News

Winners 2014

Opt. Minds Regional

Mackay

School band in
Marching primary

Recorder Band—only

Award 2012

Award 2013 Gold

Award 2014 Silver

Wakakiri—Silver

Rats of Tobruk School

Mackay North State

Celebrating 100 Years
Mackay North State School
We are looking for information on descendants of the first 37 students who enrolled on 23rd March 1915.

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Dear Parents,

Our school would like to enter Wakakirri 2015 – Australia’s search for the best Story-Dance!

Wakakirri is an annual performing arts festival for primary schools. Each year hundreds of schools across Australia perform in Professional Theatres for audiences of family, friends and the official Wakakirri ‘search’ Panel.

A Wakakirri Story Dance is a 3-7 minute performance by a school that theatrically tells a story using a combination of dancing, acting and creative movement to pre-recorded music. Schools can tell any story and use any combination props, costumes and sets.

Wakakirri is wonderful endeavour for schools, proven to develop student's creative thinking, school pride, teamwork, self worth and life skills.

Performing in Wakakirri is an experience students never forget. Schools spend show day rehearsing and meeting other schools and that same night walk the red carpet with the Panel Reps and perform on the big stage. Every school’s story is filmed for Wakakirri TV as part of the search for ‘Story of the Year’.

Rehearsals will begin term 2 and run for 12 weeks on (approx. day and time). Our school will be performing at (theatre name) in (month).

Wakakirri is a non-compulsory extra curricular activity for interested students. Participation numbers are limited and done on a first in first served basis. The total cost per student will be $100. This includes 12 rehearsals with an accredited Wakakirri specialist, costumes, makeup and performance day. Parents can buy tickets to performance day.

A full colour flyer will be sent home with your child soon including online registration details. Registration must be completed by the end of Term 1, 2015.

You can find out more about Wakakirri at www.wakakirri.com
We are proud to be sponsored by Reef Marine & Tackle World

Mackay Recreational Fishers Alliance Inc. in partnership with Tackle World Mackay will be conducting its 16th Annual **FREE to the community TAKE A KID FISHING DAY** at Shoal Point on **Sunday 8th March 2015** commencing at 9 am. **Registration open from 8 am.**

Event Coordinator Russell Manley said that if the weather is kind, the record of 210 children attending, since inception, is sure to be broken.

The concept of Take a Kid Fishing Day is to encourage parents or guardians to have some ‘value time’ with their children, away from all the electronic gadgets that consume children’s spare time these days. Other benefits include getting out in the sun, feeling the sand under your feet and enjoying the ambiance of the fantastic location chosen to conduct the event and learning some old time skills and knowledge.

Shoal Point is a great place for catching whiting, bream and flathead. The best bait is freshly dug lobbies. Failing that attendees are requested to bring their own bait. Small packets of prawns are perfect.

Mr Manley said, “We have well over 20 volunteers to lend a hand on the day. Attendees are required to register at the site on the day and all nominations will go in the hat for randomly selected prizes.”

If you’re new to Mackay and don’t have any fishing gear, you are welcome to borrow one of our rod and reel combos for the day simply by phoning Russell on 4942 6822. Russell indicated that we have limited numbers so please get in early.

Special guests for the day will include Turtle Watch with a fabulous static display, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Ezy Throw Cast Nets and the Mackay Area Fish Stocking Association.

Those attending the event are requested to be sun safe, wear a hat, bring along sunscreen lotion, protective footwear and the kids are encouraged to wear a long sleeved shirt.

*The event will conclude about lunch time with a complimentary sausage sizzle.*

For further information please contact Russell Manley on 4942 6822 or Lance Murray 0411 550 684
ALWAYS TELL SOMEONE YOUR PLANS... (4Ws + H)

WHO... you are with
WHAT... you are doing
WHERE... you are going or have been
WHEN... you left
HOW... you are travelling

- FEELING UNSAFE remove yourself. Always safety first.
- LISTEN to your body. Trust & act on your instincts.
- BE ALERT & AWARE ditch your headphones & be aware of your surroundings.
- AVOID walking alone & shortcuts. Walk with a mate.