Good afternoon Parents and Caregivers,

My observations of arrival and departure times of students across the first half of this term would indicate that I need to remind parents that the school day commences at 8.45am and concludes at 2.45pm. Attending school every day, for the full day is important to your child’s learning. Regularly missing time from class quickly aggregates into a significant loss of contact time with the class teacher.

Below is the Queensland Government’s policy for regular school attendance.

**Regular school attendance**

Parents and caregivers must send children to school every school day under Queensland law unless there is an acceptable reason such as:

- illness
- doing work experience
- competing in school sporting events

If your child is going to be absent from school, you must let the school know why the absence has occurred within two school days of their return. If possible, it is best to advise the school beforehand. Avoid keeping your child away from school for reasons such as:

- birthdays
- shopping
- visiting family and friends
- if they sleep in
- looking after other children
- minor check-ups or care, such as haircuts

Routine medical or other health appointments should be made either before or after school or during the school holidays. Establishing good routines around school can assist with regular school attendance. These include:

- have a set time to go to bed
- have a set time to get out of bed
- have uniform and school bag ready the night before
- have a set time for starting and finishing breakfast
- set a time for daily homework activities
- speak about school positively
- send your child to school every school day including their birthday and the last day of each term throughout their schooling years.

(cont’d)
If you are experiencing difficulty in sending your child to school, contact the school principal for advice and support.

CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO MEET PARENTS/CAREGIVERS AT THE SCHOOL GATES FOR AN EARLY DEPARTURE.

Our school target for all primary students’ attendance in 2014 is 95% daily attendance rate. Our year to date daily attendance rate is currently 90.5%. This result will have taken a hit with the day lost to the cyclone earlier this term; however we need to strive to reach this target. As I have mentioned previously, regular attendance at school will result in improved learning outcomes for all students. Remember my simple philosophy about education.

It’s as simple as ABC. A = Attendance, B = Behaviour and C = Curriculum.

Have these 3 things in order and student performance will improve.

**Interschool Chess Tournament**

Congratulations to the 11 students who competed in the interschool chess tournament held last week. This tournament is organised in a format that sees every student competing in each round for the entire day. All students participated in 7 rounds of chess matches. Our students had a mixed bag of results, nevertheless all students won at least two of their matches, with most students winning 4 out of 7 matches. All students thoroughly enjoyed the day. Their next tournament will be held in Term 2 on Tuesday 3rd June.
Reading—it will unlock the future for your children

Reading with our children is one of the simplest and most rewarding tasks of being a parent. However, in the busy hustle and bustle of daily life it is often overlooked. But research tells us that parents who listen to their children read for just a few minutes each day have children who are more successful readers and therefore children who are more successful at school. Research also shows that parents who read to their children, produce children who have a wider vocabulary and again are more successful in school and later life.

In order to assist parents with making this vital first step towards “READING WITH OUR CHILDREN” we will be offering a 2 hour course in the Support-a-Reader program free of charge to parents. This is a program that will give you the skills to be more confident in assisting your child with reading at home.

FREE WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS & CARERS

DATE: Thursday 13 March
WHEN: 1.00pm—2.30pm
WHERE: School Hall
COURSE LEADER: Mrs Dianne Woo

Stephen Bobby

The Centenary Committee are looking for stories from people who have ever attended Mackay North State School. If you or someone you know have any interesting anecdotes, photos or recipes to share, please send to the office or email to admin@macknortss.eq.edu.au.
A Chance to Raise Funds for the PCYC and Stop Youth Crime

On Friday 14th March, Officer Belinda (School-Adopt a Cop) will be here to “LOCK UP” Mr Bobby for a good cause.

At 1:00pm in the Covered Area Mr Bobby will be “LOCKED UP” and students will be asked to donate a gold coin to either raise bail or keep him locked up.

All the money raised goes to the Mackay PCYC to help STOP youth crime.

REMEMBER

Friday 14th March—GOLD COIN donation is required to either release or keep Mr Bobby “LOCKED UP.”
**Student Improvement**

As a parent, we all want the best for our children. We want them to have the best opportunities and experiences that we can give them.

At Mackay North State School the teachers are on your side. Our school vision is that “Every child is motivated to learn and improve.” We want every child to achieve their personal best. We will challenge student thinking and expectations and continually ‘raise the bar’ on expectations so that our students, your children, continue to grow and learn. With high expectations comes achievement. Challenges will be set and students asked to do things that they might not be entirely comfortable with. This is so that they can continue to be motivated to achieve the very best that they are capable of.

We are here to help your child be the best that they can be. We know from research that those parents who are involved and supportive of their child’s education are giving them the best opportunity to succeed. Thank you for working with us to help your child be a success.

**Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct set down by the Queensland Government for all employees, volunteers, students, contractors and consultants, states that we all must act honestly, fairly and respectfully in every dealing with others on government property, that is, at school. The code of school behaviour goes on to state the all members of school communities are expected to conduct themselves in a lawful, ethical, safe and responsible manner that recognises and respects the rights of others.

For us (adults) it means that while we are in the school grounds we act as a role model to our children. We speak politely and respectfully to one another using appropriate language. If you have a concern about someone else’s child, you must direct your concern to a member of the school staff, not to that child or a member of that child’s family.

Working together, following the code of conduct, we create a safe, supportive school environment where everyone feels welcome and our students want to be in and learn.

**Supporting your Beginning Reader**

Five steps in the procedure for supporting beginning readers

**STEP 1: Introducing the book**

- Ask your child to choose from a range of books.
- Discuss the subject matter and illustrations.
- Talk about the cover.
- Go through the book, discussing the illustrations and predicting the story-line or information.
- If possible, link the events or information to your child’s experiences.

... (cont’d)
STEP 2: The first reading

- Read the book to your child.
- Confirm or reject predictions made in the first step.

Share responses together after the reading is completed.

STEP 3: The second reading

- Read together.
- Allow your child to ‘take off’ on their own.

Begin to hand control of the reading to your child. When your child is reading along confidently, begin leaving out the words that can be easily predicted.

STEP 4: Supported reading

- Support your child’s attempts to read independently.
- Become a listener.
- Wait and observe.

Give cues and support your child’s use of strategies.

STEP 5: Revisiting a familiar text

- Ask your child to choose from a range of books previously read.

Support your child to read independently, if necessary.

Read together every day and enjoy your time together!
High School

2014 is unique as we have both year 6 and 7 students in their final year of primary school. Although we are only in term 1, it is important to begin the conversation NOW about which high school your child may attend. We have quite a large group of students who receive support from our SEP (Special Education Program) who will be enrolling in a high school setting in 2015. We will be offering support with the transition process to high school at the end of the year but in the meantime, here are a few points to consider when having the discussion with your child.

**Child-focused considerations**

Child-focused considerations include your child’s personal strengths and needs.

- **Self-care**: What level of assistance does your child require for personal care tasks such as toileting, washing hands, blowing nose and applying sunscreen?

- **Personal safety**: Do you have any concerns in regards to your child’s personal safety (e.g. climbing, exploring or opening gates)?

- **Routines and transitions**: How does your child respond to changes in routines? Does your child utilise visuals to assist them in transitioning across the day?

- **Social interaction**: How does your child respond to others within their immediate space? Does your child show an interest in initiating and maintaining social interaction with others?

- **Behaviour**: What strategies does your family have in place to assist your child when they are feeling upset or anxious? Is this strategy easily transferable?

**Family-focused considerations**

Family-focused considerations include the family unit as a whole as well as siblings and extended family members who may play an active role in your child’s life. Use the template to list any specific considerations e.g. being able to access OSHC and vacation care.

- **Location**: What is the physical location of school related to home, work and support networks? Are you able to drive long distances or do you need to find a school that is close to home? Remember that a school local to your home will mean that many other children in your suburb will attend the school. This can mean making friends, organising play dates and support networks for pick up and drop off to school may be easier.

- **OSHC and vacation care**: Will you need to access OSHC services? Not all schools have OSHC services linked to the school grounds. Schools may have OSHC and vacation care facilities on site and have strong links with these facilities to support the transition of all students as they move from school to OSHC

- **Financial considerations**: Within the Primary Education Sector there are state school, Catholic school, and independent school options. Catholic and Independent schools may require a financial contribution from parents to cover the tuition costs. When examining school options, consider the long term financial obligations.

(Cont’d)
Religious or faith-based school: If your family has a strong religious faith, it is important to decide if you would like this to be an integral part of your child’s education.

School parent body: Accessing a support network within the school community can be of great assistance to many parents. Decide if an active school parent body is an important element for your family when looking at schools. Being able to access a support network within the school community is important.

siblings: Will your child’s siblings attend the same school or a different school? Consider the individual needs of siblings and whether these can be catered for at the school.

Regardless of your friends’ opinions or the school’s reputation, you need to be happy that the school matches your family’s values and your child’s learning preferences and is the one that will give your child the most opportunities to do well in his/her areas of interest.

Wii Club

We have introduced a Wii Club in the SEP this year. Students who meet the admission criteria will be invited to attend each Friday with Junior and Senior students on alternating weeks. To be eligible to attend the Wii Club, students need to meet the following criteria:

- Homework completed
- Class work completed
- Excellent behaviour in the classroom
- Excellent behaviour in the playground

Each week, SEP staff will select two Wii monitors who will be responsible for setting up the room and Wii consoles, selecting the games, welcoming the students and packing up afterwards. The Wii Club will operate in the student’s playtime and is optional.

Congratulations to the students who were invited to attend last Friday and we look forward to seeing many more students attend.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Notes about parent/teacher interviews will be sent home in communication books over the next couple of weeks. We aim to attend these meetings with your child’s class teacher and look forward over the coming year to working with you to establish your child’s educational goals and review their progress so far. If we are unable to attend your child’s interview, please don’t hesitate to contact us in the SEP to make an appointment to discuss these matters.
School Fees

Class levies for all year levels and swimming for Prep M, Prep S, 1B, 1J, 1M, 1/2M and 2W are now due. Swimming must be paid for before students can attend. Part payments are accepted and a number of different payment options are available.

Payments can be received at the office by cash, cheque (made Payable to Mackay North State School) or eftpos. Parents can send in Visa/ Mastercard payments with their child (fill out bottom section of invoice and include CCV number), phone the office and give Visa/ Mastercard details or direct deposit into the school bank account (details on the bottom section of the invoice).

The school has applied for centrepay through CentreLink and this option should be available soon. If parents/guardians are interested in this payment option, please enquire at the school office.

School Account Details

BSB - 064707    Account Number - 00090722

Fees are as follows:

- Prep  - $39
- Year 1 - $63
- Year 2 - $50
- Year 3 - $50
- Year 4 - $110
- Year 5 - $85
- Year 6 - $335
- Year 7 - $83

ATSICHS (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Mackay) will be doing health screening on all indigenous students at MNSPS 20\textsuperscript{th} March, permission forms will be sent home but need to be returned ASAP before closing date.
I would like to personally say ‘thank you’ to Simon Korneliussen, Naomi Harberger, Michelle Azzopardi and their families for their contribution to the P&C over the last few years. Their support has been constant and they have given many hours of their time and energy for the good of our school community.

Next P & C Meeting

P & C meetings will be trialled at a new time. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 17th March at 3pm in the new library. Your school needs the support of a strong P & C so please come along and be involved in the decision making process. Remember the P & C exists entirely for the benefit of your children - help us speak for and raise funds on your child’s behalf!

Family Levy and/or Fundraising

The Family Levy was introduced in 2011 following a parent survey which indicated that the school community preferred paying a one off levy as opposed to parents volunteering to help with several smaller fundraising activities throughout the year. Due to a large shortfall limiting the P&C’s function in the school a survey has been sent home seeking feedback as to people’s views since the one done in late 2010. Please take the time to complete and return preferably by this Friday 7th March. From this survey we will make decisions regarding fundraising and budget for the coming year. Please note the need to consider outlay for the plans for the Centenary next year.

Uniform Shop

Thank you to our new volunteers in the Uniform shop. We are hoping that the uniform shop will be open more than once a week in the near future. There will be a sign on the door with opening times when this has been decided. We have numerous second hand items which can purchased for a gold coin donation.

Tuckshop

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRICE LIST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Shirts</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports Shirts</td>
<td>$17.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Jackets</td>
<td>$35.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skorts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hats (bucket and wide brim)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music Bags (A4 size)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sew-on Badges</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Hand Jackets</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Hand Items</td>
<td>Give away / gold coin</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
School Bus Assistance for Lower Income families

The safety Net Scheme was developed by the State Government to assist students who do not receive other forms of School Transport Assistance and are members of lower income families.

Who May Be Eligible?

To be eligible for assistance under the Safety Net Scheme, students must be in one of the following categories:

- Students of families eligible for a Health Care Card
- Students eligible for a Health Care Card
- Students of families eligible for a Pensioner Concession Card
- Students of families receiving Veterans Affairs Pension
- Students placed under a Care and Protection Order

Application forms with further details are available by calling into the Translink Division of the Department of Transport and Main Roads in Nelson Street, Mackay or by telephoning 4951 8673.

Conveyance Allowance Assistance

Conveyance Allowance is an assistance provided by the Department Transport and Main Roads to eligible parents/guardians who drive their children to school or to the route of a school bus.

There are several types of Conveyance Allowance available. These are determined by the type of school attended, distance driven to school or bus route and the type of school bus service (if any) provided in your area.

Application forms with further details are available by calling into the Translink Division of the Department of Transport and Main Roads in Nelson Street, Mackay or by telephoning 4951 8673.
Schools, teachers, parents and community groups, put the best educational tools at their fingertips!

We have a set of 10 iPads to be won by one lucky school. The school with the most tokens per student wins, so help your kids and their school by collecting as many tokens as you can.

DO IT FOR THE KIDS! START COLLECTING NOW! Daily Mercury


Visit www.dailymercury.com.au/competitionforms or the Daily Mercury front counter for full terms and conditions.

Competition closes 5pm, Monday March 31, 2014. Total prize value $5,580.
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.
- CONFIDENCE: walk tall, head up, shoulders back - not under the influence.
- KNOW: your abilities & what action you would take when feeling unsafe.
- HOLD: your cash & don’t look flash.
- MAINTAIN: a safety network & safety plan.
- MOBILE PHONE: install a Torch App. Carry it on your person.

Call Triple  000 if in danger.