



MERBEIN SECONDARY COLLEGE

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Newsletter No. 1

5th February, 2009

Coming Events.....

| | |
|------|--|
| 16/2 | Interhouse Swimming Carnival |
| 18/2 | School Photos |
| 26/2 | SSSSA Swimming Carnival |
| 2/3 | Year 8 Surf Camp (2 nd – 6 th March) |
| 5/3 | Immunisations – Year 7 |
| 20/3 | Northern Zone Swimming Carnival |

Term Dates for 2007

| | | |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Term 1 - | 31 st January - | 30 th March |
| Term 2 - | 16 th April - | 29 th June |
| Term 3 - | 16 th July - | 21 st September |
| Term 4 - | 8 th October - | 20 th December |

....FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

A very warm welcome to the 2009 school year to everyone and in particular to our new staff and students.

Staffing

At our first assembly last Monday we welcomed Miss Tracy Wright to our school. Miss Wright is on teacher exchange from Canada replacing Ms Chislett for twelve months. We also welcomed back a number of teachers from differing periods of leave. Ms Byrne (12 months) and Mrs Breewel (3 Terms) have returned from family leave. Miss Graham and Miss Briggs have both returned from leave taken in 4th Term last year.

In order to provide an additional Graphics class in Years 9 & 10 this Semester we have Mr Russell James working as an Instructor. Mr James is a Graphic Designer with Arctic Designs and has an extensive background in the industry.

During the holidays Mrs McPhee accepted a 3 year Leading Teacher position with the District staff.

Enrolments and Classes

We have started this year with 482 students. This is a very slight increase from the 478 last year but is again the largest enrolment for this school. As at the start of today our classes are:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Year 7 – 117 | 7A(22), 7B(24), 7C(24), 7D(23), 7E(24) |
| Year 8 – 127 | 8A(17), 8B(17), 8C(24), 8D(23), 8E(22), 8F(24) |
| Year 9 – 136 | 9A(18), 9B(17), 9C(20), 9D(21), 9E(21), 9F(20), 9G(19) |
| Year 10 – 102 | 10A(25), 10B(26), 10C(25), 10D(26) |

It must be noted that at Year 10 there is one extra class in English and Mathematics so that classes sizes in these important subjects average 20 students only. Most elective classes in Years 9 & 10 are below 20 students.

Changes to our School Day

This year our school is operating on a 3 period day with morning, middle and afternoon sessions on a 4 week timetable. The advantages from this change include:-

- Less disruption and less time lost at the change of sessions
- Less physical movement around the school for all students
- Longer sessions which should provide for more effective teaching and learning

As a result of this change our bell times are now:-

| | | |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Morning Bell | 9:00am | |
| Form Assembly | 9:05 | 9:15 |
| Morning Session | 9:17 | 10:53 |
| Recess | 10:55 | 11:15 |
| Middle Session | 11:20 | 12:56pm |
| Lunch | 12:58 | 1:46 |
| Afternoon Session | 1:51 | 3:27 |

School Buses

At the end of last year students were told to retain their bus pass to start 2009 until new bus passes are issued later this month. New students entitled to a bus pass should have received a note from the school. Students without last year's pass or a note will have to pay. Only students whose current residential address is in the Merbein Secondary College zone are eligible for a bus pass. It must be noted that at Mildura West all students who were entitled to a bus pass last year and their siblings will receive a bus pass. Our Office staff is continuing to review the eligibility of students particularly with the changes to the Mildura West zone. Any enquiries about eligibility for a bus pass should be directed to the College Office on 50 252501.

All bus travellers (including those that travel on our contract buses and do not receive a bus pass) need to complete a "blue" Conveyance Application Form. Please collect one from the Office if you haven't already done so. Forms are to be returned by Monday 9th February.

College Council

Members of College Council are reminded that the first meeting for this year will be this Monday 9th February commencing at 7:30pm. The Finance Committee will meet at 7:00pm.

Facilities

During the holidays the Boys and Girls toilets in the main wing were completely repainted. Work continued on the upgrade to the school oval.

Swimming Sports

Our school's Interhouse Swimming Sports will be held on Monday 16th February at the Merbein Pool from 5:00pm to 8:15pm.

School will commence at the usual time of 9:00am on Tuesday 17th February. This is different from some previous occasions when there was a 12 noon start following Swimming Sports.

SCHOOL START BONUS

Every student enrolled for the first time in Prep and Year 7 in Term 1 is eligible for the School Start Bonus of \$300. This is a separate payment to the Education Maintenance Allowance.

Cheques will be made payable to the first adult listed in the student's enrolment details held by the school and will be posted to that person's nominated mailing address.

Please contact the College office before 9am, Monday 8th February if you need to update your address details or you need to advise the school of your legal name to be used to create the cheque so that you can bank it.

If you have not received your payment by 31st March please contact the school.

EMA

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is provided to assist eligible families with the costs associated with the education of their children. To be eligible for the receipt of the EMA you must:

- Be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen: **and**
- Be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004 **or** be a Veterans Affairs (TPI) pensioner **or** be a foster parent.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at the first day of Term 1 and Term 3.

The EMA application must be submitted to the school by **28th February 2009** for the first payment and **4th August 2009** for the second payment.

The EMA provides an annual amount of **\$443** for secondary students and is paid in two instalments.

Parents with continuing eligibility, who are paid the first instalment of 2009 through this school, will not be required to complete a new application for the second instalment.

Application forms are available at the College office.

PHOTOS

School photos will take place on Wednesday 18th February. Photo envelopes are attached to today's newsletter. Please return the completed envelope with full payment on or before photo day. If you wish to order a family photo then please collect a family envelope from the College office.

BOOKS

Some students didn't receive text books ordered through the Merbein Newsagency. Most of the books have now

arrived so please contact them on 5025 2240 to check if your books are available for collection.

NB: Books will not be distributed through the school. They must be collected directly from the newsagents.

PANADOL & MEDICATION

Panadol **will no longer** be issued to students. Students are to make sure they are well hydrated throughout the day to avoid headaches.

If your child requires medication for any reason during school hours please contact the office regarding storage and dosage.

YEAR 8 SURF CAMP - 2009

Surf camp is coming up very quickly – we will be departing for Ocean Grove on Monday the 2nd of March, only three and a half weeks away! All students will receive a permission note and equipment list this Friday. It will need to be returned as soon as possible so that numbers can be finalised. All parents who expressed an interest in attending will be contacted over the next week to confirm availability. Students will be involved in a number of meetings over the next three weeks to prepare them for camp. This will involve organising tent groups, making sure that they have the correct equipment, organising wet suit sizes, clarifying expectations and answering any and all questions. A reminder that the second instalment of the camp fees is due prior to departure. Any families experiencing difficulty with payment are urged to contact the lovely office ladies to organise a payment plan. We are really looking forward to another successful camp, any questions, please contact myself, or Tim Rix.

...Liz Rankin

Year 8 Coordinator

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please advise the office staff of changes to your contact details. This includes phone numbers, residential and/or postal address since last year. This saves delays in parents receiving mail relevant to their children.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are not to be used at school during school hours and should not be brought to school unless they are needed for contact with parents after school.

If students bring their phone to school they should name their phone, turn it off and put it in the office before the start of school. If students choose not to put their phone in at the office, the responsibility for the security of the phone is entirely the student's.

If the phone is used at school during school hours, consequences will be enforced.

Contact by parents and students must be made through the general office.

NB: The department of Education and Early Childhood Development does not hold insurance nor does it accept responsibility for private property brought to school by students, staff and visitors.

This can include mobile phones, ipods, mp3 players, calculators, toys and sporting equipment.

YEAR 7 & 10 IMMUNISATIONS

Immunisations for Year 7 and Year 10 students will be conducted at the College on Thursday 5th March. The immunisation cards and more detailed information will be given to students within the coming weeks.

LOCKERS

All students should have a lock on their locker for security reasons. Spare keys can be kept with the form teacher.

ABSENCES

In the event of an absence of a student from school, we will require a phone call or email (address located at the top of this page) from the parent/guardian on the morning of the absence or prior notification if applicable.

LATENESS

If a student is late to school for any reason, they must check into the office before going to class or form group. Form group meeting is between 9:05 – 9:15am. Classes begin at 9:17am.

DEODORANT SPRAYS

Due to the risk to some students and staff who suffer from asthma, aerosol sprays are banned from being used at school. Roll-on deodorants are an alternative option.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Our newsletter relies on the information from students, staff, parents and members of the College community being forwarded to the College office.

If a student has participated in a sport / hobby during weekends, holidays etc and has excelled, then please let us know. Items can be emailed to the College or you can simply write it out and hand it into the office.

WATER BOTTLES

All students are permitted to take a bottle of water (screw top only) to class. Bottled water can be purchased from the cafeteria for \$1. We encourage students to drink plenty of water to help avoid headaches and other complaints associated with dehydration.

Students are **not permitted** to consume soft drink at school.

UNIFORM

The College expects students to be in full school uniform which consists of black or grey shorts (including basketball shorts), or summer dress, grey skirt (girls), white or bottle green polo shirt, shoes and socks. Sandals and open toed shoes are not permitted. **Please label all clothing.**

Students who are not in uniform for any reason must have a note explaining the reason why.

We encourage students to wear hats and sunscreen when outdoors.

LUNCH PASSES

Lunch pass application forms were issued to students today. If a student lives close to the College and wishes to go home for lunch then they must apply for a Lunch Pass. If they fit the strict criteria then a form will be sent home for parents to sign. Please send along a note if your child needs to go home for lunch before passes are issued.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

If you wish to have your newsletter sent electronically then please ring or send an email to Heather at collihole.heather.h@edumail.vic.gov.au and she will add you to the current list of recipients.

NUTRITION REMINDERS

Welcome back!

Just a couple of nutrition reminders to give your son/daughter the best possible start to the year!



Try and ensure they have breakfast – breakfast is important as it kick starts the metabolism and provides food for the brain so students concentrate and think better. For reluctant morning eaters at

least get them to have a drink – preferably milk, juice or water and send a healthy snack with them to eat when they get to school or at recess.

Healthy breakfast foods include high-fibre cereals, porridge, multigrain or wholemeal toast/crumpets, fresh fruit, low fat yoghurt.

Encourage your kids to drink water – particularly during this warmer time of year! All day sipping is best. Water bottles are allowed in the class rooms, so encourage their use! Dehydration (as little as 10 %) decreases physical performance, concentration and therefore learning ability, and is the most common cause of headache in young people.

Have a good week,

...Jo Paxton.

College Nurse.

TANIA'S FUN DANCE CLASSES

Tanya Knightley's dance classes will resume next Thursday 12th February at the Merbein S.C. Activity Centre.

5 - 7 year olds from 5:30 – 6:30pm

8 – 11 year olds from 6:30 – 7:30pm

12 years and over from 7:30pm – 8:30pm.

For further information please contact Tanya on 5024 5577 or 0427 547624.

MERBEIN FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB

A meeting for Netballers will be held at the Merbein clubrooms, Kenny Park on February 9th at 7pm. Supper will be provided, drinks available at bar prices. All nominations for committee members on the night. Current and intending players encouraged to attend. All family and supporters welcome.

Leading up to our 'Centenary Year' – Your Town...Your Team!

SUNRAYSIA SINGERS

Community choirs for children aged 3-17 years. Join one of these exciting new choirs and have fun, perform, make new friends and learn musical skills.

Contact 50251213 or 0437 976524 for further information.

STH MILDURA FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB

A Registration Night is being held on Monday 9th Feb from 6-7pm at the Clubrooms for new and existing players in all grades (11&U, 13&U, 15&U, 17&U, C Grade, B Grade and A Grade). If you are unable to attend, or for more information, please contact Lisa on 50230079 or saunders.lisa.1@edumail.vic.gov.au

FOR SALE

1 X Size 10 school dress in excellent condition - \$30

Phone: 5021 0857

Mr Garry Costello

PRINCIPAL