PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

Strategic Direction 1: Teachers as Lead Learners
As discussed in previous newsletters, Ermington West PS was selected from over 40 schools state-wide to undertake a research project for MacICT (this is a centre at Macquarie University established through a partnership with the university and the Department of Education). This project, called ‘Future Pedagogies’ allowed us to focus how we balance student directed learning and explicit, evidence based teaching. This project was finalised last Thursday with Mrs Simic, Miss Isaacs and Miss Haynes making the final presentation. At the next P&C meeting, we will share the presentation with you as it is an excellent snapshot of where we are at this point in time.

All classroom teachers are working on Semester One reports which involves compiling evidence of learning throughout the semester. All Key Learning Areas will be broken up into strengths and challenges so that parents can easily see the areas to celebrate and goals for future development. The reports will come home at the beginning of Week 10.

Mrs Hutchens, Miss Haynes and I visited Miller PS last week to look at how Formative Assessment practices operate in classrooms.

What’s all the buzz about formative assessment?
When most people hear the word assessment in reference to schools and classrooms, they typically think about a test or exam used to measure what a student knows about specific topic. That test is often followed with a grade and/or ranking.

In classrooms throughout Ermington West PS, teachers are using another means of gathering real-time information about student learning in order to guide instruction. This is called Formative Assessment. For example, rather than waiting until the end of a topic or unit, formative assessment
techniques are used by the teacher and students to get immediate feedback of student understanding. This is used on a regular basis, so that instruction and activities can be quickly changed to meet the learning needs of students long before the final assessment. Formative assessment gives teachers immediate feedback from students about learning. Teachers, in turn, respond to meet the immediate needs of students.

There are a number of techniques our teachers may be using to help them assess student learning. For example:

- Instead of asking for volunteers to answer questions, teachers randomly call students in “No hands-up” - the class (some use paddle pop sticks or a random student name generator on their computer) to answer questions. Typically, when students raise their hands, only those who know the answer do so. Students who do not know the answer may feel embarrassed or intimidated, causing them to tune out. “No hands up” helps each student engage in his/her learning and helps students learn from each other.

- Some teachers may have students write their answers on mini whiteboards. These are powerful tools that allow teachers to ask questions and get answers from the entire class at a quick glance.

**Strategic Direction 2: Partnerships in Learning**

Active Kids library visits have continued throughout the term with a small group of children from Active Kids Ermington visiting us each week. These visits have occurred with the support of the library monitors, Molly, Melanie, Gemma and Amelia who have assumed complete responsibility for this program. Each week they read with a younger buddy, and help them borrow books to read. These students have been wonderful ambassadors for our school.

We recently held a gathering in recognition of Reconciliation Week. The gathering was run by our 3-6 Indigenous students who explained the meaning behind this important time of year. Miss Dixon’s leadership in Aboriginal Education is to be commended as she plays an integral role in our partnerships with the community. Thanks to the parents who attended the gathering. The afternoon tea was a hit with the students!

Miss Elias and Miss Haynes will mentor two second year students from Macquarie University for a 10 day block starting on day one, Term 3. As this is the first practical experience in a school, these students will work in pairs, with lesson observations forming the bulk of their time.

The Bunnings cake stall was a showcase of our school community with a core group of parents leading the way, and ultimately the case of many hands working together. The range and quality of cakes was such a treat. Thank you to the P&C, the 25 families who donated cakes and all of the parents who assisted on the day.

The AFL after school clinic has proved quite popular with over 30 students enrolled and attending. We decided to look at other options this year for school sport time in order to allow the students to experience a variety of sports. The AFL program will run for two more weeks.

**Strategic Direction 3: Students as Leaders and Learners**

Soccer season has commenced and the weather has been relatively kind to us. It is wonderful to see the teams playing competitively but fairly. The support we have on the sidelines from parents is much welcomed by teachers and students who enjoy having an audience to watch them play. Thank you to Miss Isaacs and Mrs Hutchens for leading the teams and to Mrs Neilson/Mrs Chambers/Mrs Collins for the considerable organisation "in the background"

KE recently had the ‘Living Eggs’ resource in the classroom as part of their science unit called ‘Paddock to Plate’. Miss Elias and Kindergarten enjoyed watching the eggs crack and the baby chicks come out of the eggs. They learnt some valuable lessons about nature and had fun learning with the chicks over their short stay at KE. The measuring lesson on heavy and light using the baby chicks will be etched in their memories!

Students recently attended a Deaf Awareness Workshop which was designed specifically for school children, to raise their awareness of deaf people in our community. It provided them with an introduction to deaf culture and basic information on how to communicate with deaf people. The workshop was run by a deaf presenter accompanied by an Auslan interpreter.

We were approached by Sydney University who provided us with a free coding workshop. Students learnt a lot during the short session as they wrote code and built a commercial grade 3d world from scratch. They also received access to the commercial quality game development software. This workshop ran on a Friday and as such, PSSA teams were not able to attend. (Unfortunately, we had no control over the date and time.) However, all students were provided with a subscription to the website.

**Sincerest apologies** to Melanie in 5/6I as I left her name off the list of students researching the radio station in the last newsletter. Sorry Mel!

Kind regards,

**Shannan Judge**

Principal
Student Attendance at School

Absentee information: When children miss out on school they miss out on vital information, their learning routine is broken, they can lose confidence and they miss out on building up friendships. If your child has to be absent from school for any reason, including arriving late or leaving early, please either tell your child's teacher or the administrative assistant at the school, or explain the reason by phone, email, SMS or written note as soon as possible, or within seven days.

Once children are enrolled parents are legally required to send them to school every day that the school is open for instruction or participation in school activities, such as sports days. A small number of absences may be justified if your child:

- has an unavoidable medical or dental appointment (preferably these should be made after school or during holidays)
- has to go to special religious ceremony
- is required to attend a serious and/or urgent family situation (e.g. a funeral)
- is too sick to go to school, or has an infectious illness.

Failure to explain an absence within this time will be recorded as an unjustified absence on a student's record. Schools will inform parents if a student is absent from school without explanation.

What should I do if our family is going on holiday in school time?
Families should try to arrange holidays during school vacations. If they can only be arranged during school time, you should contact the school principal in advance to discuss the matter.

When and where to get help:
The department has implemented a number of attendance programs to support parents in ensuring their children attend school regularly. If you are having difficulty getting your child to attend school regularly, you might like to talk to the school principal or the school counsellor.

Whole day attendance Semester One, 2015

The graphs below indicate the number of whole day absences from 28 January 2015 until Friday 5 June 2015. The bar graph details the number of absences for each category. The pie graph indicates the percentage the category represents of total absences. It is clear that the number of unjustified/unexplained absences is of concern. There are approximately 300 days of leave which have not been explained by parents, or the explanation given is unjustified according to the NSW DEC School Attendance Policy. Just missing eight days of school each term will mean that your child will miss a whole year of school by the end of primary school. For more detailed information please visit the NSW DEC site: https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/attendance/sch_polproc/att_proc.pdf
Partial attendance (late arrival and early leavers) Semester One 2015

The graphs below indicate the number of partial absences from 28 January 2015 until Friday 5 June 2015. The bar graph details the number of absences for each category. The pie graph indicates the percentage the category represents of total absences. Again, it is evident that the number of unjustified/unexplained absences is of concern. There are approximately 140 days of leave which have not been explained by parents, or the explanation given is unjustified according to the NSW DEC School Attendance Policy. This is another reminded that it is not acceptable to simply drop students off outside the school after the 9:00am bell. **All students arriving late to school must be accompanied by a parent to the office to receive a late note.** Many times, students are arriving five or ten minutes late to school. We ask parents to consider their morning routine in order for punctual arrival at school.
Merit Certificates and other awards are presented to students each fortnight at the Thursday assembly. Congratulations to the following students who recently attained awards:

**Merit Certificates:**
- KE 1-2D: Jay-Dee T, Giovanna P.
- KE 1-2H: Reyana D, Charles C.
- 2-3H: Ava G, Maria K.
- 4-5S: Leandré P, Jemimah K.
- 5-6I: Leanne D, Matthew K.

**Bronze Striver:**
- Muhammad E, Amelia H, Nima K, Chloe B.

**Silver Striver:**
- Mine U, Elizabeth F, Amelia H, Neda P, Sititi F, Sabrina O.

**Gold Striver:**
- Blake B, Tatiana S, Ayden B.

**Sport Awards:**
- Cherie H, Mustafa R, Ava G.

**Principal's Awards:**

**Grip Leadership Awards**
SILVER SAVERS FUNDRAISER

The Silver Savers fundraiser has now started. Special Silver Saver jars have been placed in every classroom. Please bring your donations of silver coins (5c, 10c, 20c and 50c) and place them in the special jar. At the end of the year, the class who are the best SILVER SAVERS (have the most money in their class jar), will win a fun class prize. Start bringing in your silver coins now!

Thank you to all the EWPS families who supported the P&C’s fundraising Cake Stall at Bunnings on the June long weekend.

We raised an amazing $790!

This fundraiser wouldn’t have been possible without the support of Bunnings Rydalmere (thank you Barbara) and over 25 Ermington West families who donated items. What a talented bunch of home cooks we have amongst us: beautifully decorated cupcakes, rocky road, jellies, chocolate crackles, brownies, cookies, baklava and mouth watering cakes to tempt our customers. As Daniel (Bunnings staff) said, “It’s one of the best cake stall displays I’ve ever seen!” (and he’s seen quite a few!)

A special shout out to the hardworking parents who packaged and priced the donations, and our very special volunteers who sacrificed valuable family time on the long weekend to represent our school and sell our delicious treats.

We all value quality time with our children and families, so we sincerely appreciate those who are willing to give up their free time for a fundraiser that will benefit all students at Ermington West. Your generosity and community spirit sets a wonderful example for your children and contributes to making Ermington West such a great environment for all.

THANK YOU!
REMINDER: INTERRELATE

The P&C have arranged for Interrelate, a specialist organisation with over 85 years' experience teaching sexuality and relationship education in NSW schools, to present two informative sessions for families. These are a great opportunity to facilitate parent-child discussions.

Tuesday 21st July from 6.00pm

Session 1: Where did I come from?
1 hour session for Years 3-6 and their parents

Session 2: Preparing for puberty
1 hour session for years 5-6 and their parents
Years 3-4 can attend at parent’s discretion

Cost: $25 per family for one session or $30 per family for both sessions

If you would like to reserve your place, please send a note to the school indicating which session/s you would like to attend and enclose payment.

WINTER WARMER SAUSAGE SIZZLE

As a special treat for the end of Term 2, the P&C is organising a Winter Warmer Sausage Sizzle at lunchtime on Friday 26th June.

Look out for the note that will go home soon to pre-order your sausage sizzle for just $1.

If you can help out on the day, serving the sausage sizzle to students (no BBQing involved!) please contact the P&C at ewpspc@optusnet.com.au or post a message on our Parents of EWPS facebook page

ANOTHER GRANT SUCCESS STORY

The P&C is proud to announce we have secured yet another grant! This time, it’s a $3,000 Sports Grant from Parramatta City Council that will go towards the K-6 gymnastics program in Term 3. Every single family at Ermiting West will benefit from this funding, which will reduce your out of pocket expenses for this program to almost half what it would usually cost.

SUPER SCARF SELLOUT

You may have noticed parents around the school sporting some gorgeous hand-knitted scarves – there’s a good chance these are the creations knitted by Louise Nicholson. Louise, among her many talents, is a wonderful knitter and kindly volunteered to knit some fashionable winter scarves and donate the proceeds to the P&C. If you managed to get one of these incredibly popular items, you were very fortunate indeed, as they sold out quickly. If you missed out, join us on the Parents of EWPS Facebook page to see whether Louise will have more for sale soon. Thank you for your generosity Louise!
HURRY.........LAST CHANCE TO BE IN THE DRAW!!

EWPS 2015 School Leadership Raffle

$400 Worth of Prizes to be Won

1st Prize  2 x Adult Entry Passes to Taronga Zoo
          (Valued at $92)  Exp. 27.08.15

2nd Prize  1 x Family Pass to the Australian Reptile Park
          (Valued at $85)  Exp. 08.08.15

3rd Prize  1 x Big Ticket Family Pass to the Australian National Maritime Museum
          (Valued at $70)  Exp. 30.12.15

4th Prize  2 x Adult Entry Passes to Featherdale Wildlife Park
          (Valued at $58)  Exp. 31.07.15

5th Prize  2 x tickets to a Parramatta Riverside Theatre 2015 season show
          (Valued at $50)  Exp. 31.12.15

6th Prize  1 x Family Entry Pass to the Australian Museum
          (Valued at $38)  Exp. 30.10.15

All proceeds go towards leadership opportunities for our students,
such as the GRIP Leadership Conference, which our
School Leaders and House Captains are attending this year at Homebush.

Tickets $1.00 each
(available for purchase under the COLA)

Tickets on sale from Monday 18 May to Thursday 11 June.
The raffle will be drawn at assembly on Thursday 11 June 2015.
When kids ask “the” questions... Interrelate has the answers!

Interrelate is a specialist organisation with over 85 years’ experience teaching sexuality and relationship education in NSW schools. Interrelate educators are highly trained and skillful presenters.

The topic of sexuality is handled with sensitivity, openness and humour. The program offers an interactive approach to learning, with a variety of audio-visual materials, discussions and games.

Session 1: Where did I come from?
1-hour session; years 3-6
$25 per family for one session
$30 per family for both sessions

Session 2: Preparing for puberty
1-hour session; years 5-6
Years 3-4 can attend at parent’s discretion
Date: Tuesday, 21th July 2015 from 6:00pm
Emmington West Public School
Specially books are available for purchase on the night.
Keep a look out for flyers (coming home with your child before the program) outlining session content.

Marsden High School, West Ryde presents the ghoulishly funny musical:

Dracula Spectaculaza

Located In the – Marsden School Hall
Wed 17th June & Thurs 18th June
7.00pm to 9.30pm
Prices are as follows:
Student / Child - $2.00
Adult - $5.00
Purchase your tickets online now at:
www.trybooking.com/138910
You’ll have a frightfully good time