**Message from the Principal**

**GREAT NEWS - COOLING SOLUTIONS ON THE WAY!**

Last night our School Council approved the installation of air-conditioning units in the BER (Senior School) classrooms. This will complete the cooling solutions project that began a couple of years ago. Thank you and well done to everyone who contributed to the organisation of this project, particularly members of our School Council in previous years. We will now organise this installation to occur before the warm weather and with as minimal disruption as possible.

The funds needed for this project (which is just over $60,000) have been raised through our wonderful PTA. This includes $16,500 from our recent Trivia Night and $3,500 from other PTA events this year and also just over $11,000 from our SPLASH Art Show last year. (Other SPLASH money was used to purchase a new kiln for the Art room, $2,000 art supplies and also $11,000 towards our oval project).

Most importantly we have been able to sign off on this project because of the increase in the level of voluntary payments we have received this year. We now have over 70% of our families paying both the Library and Building Fund voluntary payments and over 67% paying the Grounds and Maintenance voluntary levy. These payments are vital for our school. They enable us to build a stronger financial platform to manage the school now and into the future and they assist us to complete projects that improve the facilities at our school for our students. Thank you to all those that have contributed in this way. I know it is cold at the moment but when the hot weather arrives later this year our students will be in a much better space to learn!

**GOOD NEWS – SKOOLBAG UPDATE**

We are pleased to announce that Skoolbag is now available for Windows Phones running version 8.1 of Windows, and Windows devices running Windows 8.1 or 10 (e.g. Surface tablet, Laptop, PC, etc.). This makes the app even more accessible than before with the ability to receive messages directly to a PC, Laptop, or Surface Tablet running Windows 8.1 or 10.

To install Skoolbag on your Windows device, look up “Skoolbag” in the Windows Store, and install it. Once installed you can find your school, and pin it to your Windows Home Screen.

Please note: You must be running at least Windows 8.1 on your device for the app to function.

**HOMEWORK**

I am currently in the process of working with our staff team to develop and then roll out a more consistent approach to homework across our school. I know that there are varied opinions as to the value of homework and we could debate this for a long time. There is research that suggests homework provides little to no value to the outcomes for students.
I also know that as a school we must ensure that our students are ready to make a successful transition into high school and part of this is being organised and prepared for the learning that happens at school each day. I know that one size will not fit all and that we won’t be able to implement a process that satisfies all of our community. However, we can improve our current approach.

If you have an opinion you would like to share with me or a suggestion about homework at KPS please email me in the next 2 weeks:
penson.james.j@edumail.vic.gov.au

PARENT OPINION SURVEY
This is the very last call for parents that were randomly selected to complete the annual parent opinion survey. These need to be returned to school by tomorrow, Friday 7th, as we need to send them back via courier on Monday. So far we have received 36 out of the 71 sent home.

REMINDER PUPIL FREE DAY
Next Friday 14th August is a pupil free curriculum day.

There will be no assembly this week. Our Senior and Middle School students will be at the House Athletics Carnival and the Junior School will be at the Zoo on an excursion. The preps will have the run of the entire school!

3 WAY CONFERENCES 2015 - PARENT FEEDBACK SURVEY
Thank you to those 63 parents who completed the 3 Way Conferences – Parent Survey. I was really pleased with both the level and quality of this feedback. The improvements we made this year were acknowledged and overall there was extremely positive feedback for the direction we are taking with our 3 Way Conferences. The 2015 survey itself reflects an overall improved score from last year.

I thought I would include a few of the questions and comments we received and have added a reply to some:

Parent - “Great idea, the 3 way conferences give the student/parent/teacher transparent voice and recognition. The process strengthens the scaffolding kids need between home and school for confidence and a feeling of success at school”

Parent - Can parents have discussion with the teacher at the absence of student as well? E.g. at the end of 3 way conference?

Parent - I would suggest that the first 10 minutes should be for parent- teacher only. The child should be doing their presentation in the later 5 minutes

Parent - Classroom provides a comfortable environment for children & an opportunity to be in the classroom and view their work. Happy also to have flexibility of time to attend the conference throughout the day. Would value the opportunity to talk 1:1 with the teacher after 3 way conference to discuss any other matters important in child’s school life.

James Penson (JP) - Splitting the conference into a sections of student involvement and then time without the student undoes the value of the whole process and what we are trying to achieve with the conferences. The analogy I would use is that it would be like inviting someone into a game of cricket and asking them to field but then not have a turn batting or inviting someone to the footy but asking them to leave the ground at 3 quarter time! Imagine what your child would be thinking if they had to leave the room at the end of their conference so that mum and dad could talk to the teacher without them? They would be wondering what is being discussed and also thinking that the conference with them was just a charade for the real parent teacher interview afterwards.

Parent - We were impressed by the 3-Way conferences this year. Overall they seemed to have more structure, the children certainly had more of an understanding as to their role & the teachers somehow managed to run on time at the end of the day!
Parent - We would prefer a parent/teacher interview without the child present. The 3 way conference is a good idea but shouldn’t replace the traditional parent/teacher interviews. Parents are unable to ask questions freely if their child is present.

Parent - I don’t think 3 way conferences should be the only formal interview time set aside throughout the academic year. It’s okay as an add on but should not be used to replace parent teacher interviews.

_JP - Our 3 Way Conferences are not a replacement for traditional parent teacher interviews. Anytime during the year a parent is able to make contact with the teacher to set up a meeting time. I know these meetings happen each week across our school as teachers keep me informed with their work and what is happening with different students in the classrooms. I also know that our teachers make contact with parents when there is a need to have a discussion._

Parent - I would prefer to discuss my son’s progress more regularly through a 5 minutes check in monthly with the teacher.

_JP - This can happen. Just speak with your child’s teacher!_

Parent - I think there was a huge improvement in the three way conferences this year, I specifically liked the fact that the children have reflected on difficulties and also on ways to improve.

Parent - More than 1 weeks’ notice of the meeting would be good. If you know the planned date and time for the meeting then please let parents know in advance so we can reschedule work to guarantee attendance of such an important meeting. I was just lucky not to be working today and was able to attend to grade 2 conference.

_JP – This comment was a little disappointing. We first mentioned the date and times for our 3 Way Conferences in the newsletter on the 4th June (which is 8 weeks’ notice). The date was then highlighted in every newsletter in the weeks leading up to the 30th July. A note was sent home with all students on the first week back of term (17th July) and on 21st July the first of 3 Skoolbag alerts were sent out. There was certainly more than one week’s notice!_

We also communicated that if this time did not suit then it was as easy as contacting the teacher to make an alternative time. Some parents have done this as we have had a number of 3 Way Conferences before and after school during this week.

I always ask parents and carers to spend just 5 minutes to have a quick read through the newsletter each week. This is the best way of staying in touch and informed about what is happening at our school. I also think it would be a great shared reading activity or material for discussion as a family at home on a Thursday evening or over the weekend.

I don’t subscribe to the “I haven’t got time to read it” excuse. If you can’t invest 5 minutes to keep up with the news at your child’s school you need to look at what your priorities are. We have worked really hard to improve our communication both in terms of timeliness and level of detail. Please support our work in this area.

Parent - 15 minutes of time for each conference is too short as most of time used for students to present themselves and leave no time for parents to ask you anything they concern

Parent - Maybe allocate 20mins.

_JP – I agree, 15 minutes is not long for these important conversations. However we must all remember that our teachers have more than one student. An increase by 5 minutes to 20 minutes would add an additional 2+ hours to many of our teacher’s days. These days were already over 11 hours as it was. The only way this could be achieved would be to have the whole day set aside as a Variation to School Hours Day. That is something our staff and school council may consider next year._
Parent - The 15 minute time slot was too short. It felt really rushed and not all the prepared information was delivered. The teacher didn’t have enough time for input. I would have liked a time when my child was out of the room so I could ask some questions that were difficult to ask while my child was there. I was offered to make another time to talk about other things but frankly I don’t want to (or find time) again. I would also suggest that the children have the whole day off so that the interviews don’t go so late. Hard on families and hard on the teachers. Also, having a curriculum day next week is hard on working parents. The half day meant that a whole day from work was lost and now we also have to lose another day for the curriculum day. I understand that curriculum days are important but couldn’t the three way conference be a curriculum day? I would rather have the option of making an appointment for a parent-teacher interview as needed (requested by parents or teachers than have to do a compulsory three-way conference.

JP – DET schools only have 4 Curriculum Days each year. We often use 2 of these days to help our school and staff with the start-up process at the beginning of the year. This includes briefings, hand over meetings, team planning meetings and initial professional development and learning activities. During the year we need the other 2 days to ensure that we deliver a high quality professional learning program for our staff. John Hattie’s research highlights that one of the most important things a school can do (within their control to improve student outcomes) is to invest heavily in staff professional learning. The highest impact on these outcomes, after family backgrounds and parental influence (which accounts for 50% of a student’s potential outcome) is the impact a teacher has. This research states this can account for 30% of a student’s potential outcome. (You may be asking where the other 20% is? A school as a whole has a 5% factor, a principal around 5% and there are a range of other smaller factors).

It is very difficult to ensure quality professional learning during a busy school week. We do set aside time for this as well as planning meetings and general staff meetings, however a whole day as a curriculum day allows more effective and focused time. These days allow us to work with educators such as Michael Ymer.

If our school is to become the best it can be we cannot afford to use a curriculum day for 3 Way Conferences.

Be Worthy!
James Penson
Principal

Commonwealth School Banking

There will be no Commonwealth School Banking next week.

Kew Primary School Blog

Ready for lots of bookish events? The school library certainly is - find out all the details on this week’s blog.

If you have something you'd like to share on the school blog, please drop me a line at:
katrina.w@ozemail.com.au

Katrina Whelen
Message from the Assistant Principal

Student engagement and wellbeing is, of course, a major component of learning for any school. Such learning is always underpinned by a values program. These programs define the values and behaviours we want our students to display towards teachers, parents and each other so that when they leave Kew PS they are equipped to be positive individuals, who are resilient and can contribute to society in a meaningful way. Here at Kew PS our values program is known as CARE, each letter represents a value that we as a school community believe to be vital for our student’s development as well-rounded individuals. C is for Co-operation, A for Acceptance, R for Respect and E is for Excellence. The student population has been divided vertically, across the school and each CARE group has a number of Grade Six leaders who run the program, supported by a teacher who has been assigned to the group. From my point of view, I really enjoy working with my CARE group and being part of interaction among the students from Preps to Year Six. In the next four weeks, each CARE group will be designing a school based project aimed at increasing our sense of community and celebrating our cultural diversity. Next year it is hoped that each CARE group will then take their ideas further and develop a number of projects for the wider Kew community. Some projects may entail visiting and entertaining residents at an old people’s home or working with kindergarten children; who knows what our students will come up with. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work done by our Student Engagement and Wellbeing team- Bit McLean, Nat Ryan, Sally Marsh, Chelsea Carmichael, Kerrie Lomas, lead so ably by Clare Connor.

Please keep the morning of Sunday August 30th free because that is when we are having our next working bee. The school needs a tidy up and a mound of tanbark needs to be moved to the garden beds along Peel Street. Of course, some sweeping, weeding and planting will be on the “jobs to do list”. Please keep an eye out for a flyer, in next week’s newsletter and as always, “many hands make light work.”

Robin Grace

Bike Ed (Year 3 and 4)

All Middle School students will be starting Bike Education. Some bikes that have not been used for a while may need a service. There are a small amount of school bikes that students can use, but the school encourages students to use their own bikes. Our school bikes are also due for a service. If there are any parents who are willing to give a small amount of time to help service these bikes, please contact Clare (connor.clare.m@edumail.vic.gov.au).
Lamont Book Fair

When:   Wednesday 12th August & Thursday 13th August
        Before & after school

This is a new company for us and I am looking forward to seeing their selection of books. The commission from the book fair helps buy resources for the Library.

Book Week Book Orders

This week all students received an order form for books by the visiting Book Week speakers. Leigh Hobbs will be presenting sessions to Prep – Year 3 and Heath McKenzie will present to Years 4 – 6. If you would like to order any books please return the form and payment to the office by Monday 10th August.

Book Week Dress Up

On Friday 21 August we will be having Book Week Dress Up and a parade at Assembly. This is a fun event to celebrate our favourite story book characters.
Kidproof Safety have done an incredible job collating feedback from students, parents and staff about the cyber-safety sessions delivered in Term 1. How challenging it must have been to keep the children’s spelling authentic with auto-correct! It’s a comprehensive 33 page document so look out for snippets in the newsletter over the next few weeks. Here are some of the Prep-2 responses from students at Kew Primary School………..

**The most important message I learnt today was…………….**

“No to give people your passwords”

“Be very very very VERY careful on computers because people can be norty”

“Don’t belive everything everyone says”

“Don’t go open werd emails”

“Nevr gev out your fooel name”

**One thing I did not know before was………..**

“Pepole can put imiges of other people”

“Never to meet someone you met on the internet”

“People can tric you on the compyooter because they are meen”

“That there is a bunch more rules on the computer that I thort”

**I would like to find out more about……………..**

“How to be safe around strangers and how to be safe around technolgy”

“The tricks people do so that I can avoyd them”

“Using the internet problay”

“What you should do if something pops up so if it really happens I will be redy”

**I have changed my mind about………..**

“Evrithing”

“Telling people my age”

“When I have to put my name on the computa to play a game I will mace a madup name”

“Making friends onlin”

Not shearing infmashon”

Stay safe online - Madame T & the eSmart team
Father’s Day & Special Person’s Breakfast

You are invited to join your child for a special breakfast, to enjoy being together, and to celebrate with other Dads and Special Persons

Thursday 3rd September from 7.30am

To be served outside canteen

Bookings available now via www.trybooking.com/IQWM closes midnight Sun 30th Aug.

Select from a gourmet menu - you must pre-order your food, no payments on the day.

Come along and enjoy a delicious breakfast with your child

Adults - Bacon & Egg roll & coffee $8
Kids - Bacon & egg roll & hot choc $6
Croissant, butter, jam & hot choc $5
Fruit skewers $3

Adults - Fresh coffee - coffee cart
Kids - Hot chocolate - canteen

To be served outside canteen

Book by midnight Sun 30th Aug
No late bookings this year
www.trybooking.com/IQWM

Booking confirmation required when collecting breakfast
Program Update

At OSH-club we love exploring all the different themes every week, learning new activities and making new discoveries... This week our theme was ‘Animals from around the world’. We began our Monday morning indoors discussing our weekends before heading to the gym for animal tag, racing around and burning all our energy. Throughout the week we participated in lots of different animal activities from finger painting, to animal masks, from octopus to aussie bulldog we were excited to play some new games with our friends. Throughout the week we enjoyed an ongoing project... designing our own animal competition. Each day a new item was placed on the table to extend our animal, we first had to sketch the animal and then continue to add to the animal to create something marvelous. On Friday we are displaying each step of the process in creating our animals 😊

Reminders
If any families have some photos with their animals we would love to see them! If your child is booked to attend After School Care but other arrangements are made for their collection (such as a family member), or they leave school early due to illness etc., please call or text the program on 0400 394 469 to let us know. This avoids us having to look around the school grounds for children who aren’t actually attending ASC, and having to call parents and emergency contacts to determine the child’s actual whereabouts. We just want to know they are safe 😊

A selection of Next Week’s Activities –Book Week

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<td>Before Care Activities</td>
<td>Design a book cover</td>
<td>Group story</td>
<td>Action hero sketch</td>
<td>Table tennis</td>
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<td>Giants treasure</td>
<td>making Indoor soccer</td>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Beading</td>
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<td>After Care Activities</td>
<td>Table tennis</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
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<td>Action hero sketch</td>
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Parent Information

OSHC program phone: 0400 394 469
Coordinator: Harriet Assistant Coordinator: Lauren Assistants: Niki, Lea
OSHC Club Head Office: 03 85649000
ASC Hours: 7:00am – 0.45am ASC Hours: 3:30pm – 6:30pm
All families must be enrolled to attend the program, remember this is Free! Please create an account online at www.oshclub.com.au all bookings and cancellations can also be managed via your online account. For on the day bookings please contact the Coordinator direct at the program.
The snow season is officially open!!!

Get your entry in NOW for the Victorian Interschools Snowsports Championships at Mt. Buller August 24-26, 2015 and represent Kew Primary

Entry forms are available at the school office or contact Nikki Schwarz (nikki@sraccountants.com.au) or Sonali Le Brocque (dse195@hotmail.com) for more information.

Payments are to be made via Trybooking:

http://www.trybooking.com/ICJJ