STUDENT FREE DAY

The purpose of last Friday's student free day was to enable staff to be involved in Training and Development. For the majority of staff this was in Jolly Phonics, however several staff attended training in the Maths (Australian Curriculum) and the delivery of Certificate subjects in Senior School.

Jolly Phonics is an intensive program of sound recognition that begins at Reception and supports the development of early reading. It is a very interactive program, highly engaging and successful, especially when supported by parents and caregivers through short daily practice. Jolly Phonics has been used with Reception students taught by Ms Wilamowski since Term 3 this year and will be more broadly adopted as a strategy for reading development at the beginning of 2012. It will follow into other year levels as will the pick up of Jolly Grammar. The investment of time in a whole day of training and purchase of resources to implement the program fits with current educational thinking here in South Australia, and other countries. Early next year we plan to hold information sessions for parents with the purpose of giving an understanding of how the program works and the important role parents have in spending time at home to reinforce the learning.

MANAGING E-CRIME: SCHOOL OBLIGATION AND RESPONSE

I have included the DECD guidelines for principals of Government school in this edition of the school newsletter in relation to E-crime. As the use of and type of technology increases so too do we, as users and the parents of users, need to know what is legal and safe usage.

The enclosed guidelines give information about:
1. What is E-crime.
2. Responsibilities of leaders when there is a suspected E-crime.
3. Responsibilities of leaders when there is a suspected child protection issue.
4. Responsibilities of leaders when online student behaviour threatens the well being of a student or staff member.

Additionally, the guidelines spell out the complaints process in regard to services such as Facebook.

Perhaps it is not widely known that Facebook has conditions of membership. One of these conditions is that a member must not be younger than 13 to have an account.

If a community member finds offensive material on the internet or on an electronic device, they can make a report to The Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA). To do this go to www.cybersmart.gov.au click on the Cybersafety Help button and they will guide you through the prompts to make a complaint.

SCHOOL SAFETY

I seek the support of the school and wider community in keeping an eye on the school in
the coming weeks, particularly over the long summer holiday break. Fortunately, we have very little vandalism, and this is a reflection of community values. We enjoy beautiful, well kept grounds, a credit to the hard work of our Groundskeepers; Mr John Hastings and Mr Geoff Halliday, who put in countless hours maintaining equipment, gardens and buildings.

Unfortunately, last weekend the front fence to the school was set alight, burning the weaving that had been part of the recent community project in decorating front fences. Two panels have been destroyed and will have to be replaced. Any information to either the school or police in regard to this matter would be appreciated.

It is timely to remind the community that the only persons on school grounds out of hours including the holidays are those in an authorised capacity. This includes employed staff, contract workers, library patrons (going to and from the library), those hiring the pool, and others who have entered in to an agreed hire arrangement, using the grounds or hall.

**END OF YEAR FUNCTIONS**

**Presentation Night** is in the last week of term on Tuesday 13th December is to be held in the newly refurbished Meningie Area School Hall/Gymnasium commencing at 7.15 for a 7.30 pm start. Presentation Night is a Middle and Senior School formal function where student achievement and success throughout the year is acknowledged and celebrated. We are fortunate once again to be supported by local clubs, businesses and individuals who sponsor book prizes and we thank them for their ongoing support of the school. This year we are fortunate to have ex Meningie Area School student Kate Elphick (nee Thorpe) as our guest speaker. Kate is an Occupational Therapist.

As this is a formal school function students are expected to be in school uniform. We look forward to this event, and sharing our 2011 achievements with our school community. Students’ work will be on display to be viewed before and after the formal proceedings. We ask that parents bring a plate of supper to share.

The final **Junior School Assembly** will also be held in the hall/gym, on Wednesday 14th December, commencing at 10am. We hope our Junior School families are able to join us for the last formal event of the school year.

**REQUEST RE: STUDENTS LEAVING**

Once again I seek your assistance in advising either Coralie Qualmann or myself about any child or children leaving the school at the end of this year.

As school funding is tied to the number of students attending Meningie Area School, knowing exactly how many student we will have at the beginning of 2012 enables us to accurately establish classes and employ teachers and support staff. Thankyou in anticipation of your support. I understand that issues with regard to this can be sensitive, and of course your personal confidentiality will be maintained.

Monica Williams

**DANCE FOR THE FUN OF IT**

On Tuesday 29th November our Reception to Year 9 classes participated in 'Dance for the Fun of It', a show connected to 'School Performance Tour'.

Mrs. Williams kindly enabled an active participation from all students, with the school covering the cost of student attendance.

The show ran for 45 minutes and was a high quality and very entertaining event. Students met Jake, the young, agile dancer who introduced students to a brief history of dance through a series of humorous dance sequences.

From the ocean spray of ancient sea vessels, to the violence and noise of the American Bronx, we learned that dance can tell a story of our past and present experiences. Jake enriched our learning through costume changes, a puppet and a wide range of musical pieces to show how our environment, traditions, culture and language weave their way into dance steps and fashion.

Students and teachers from all age ranges were invited to join the conga line.
SAPSASA RUGBY LEAGUE CLINIC

On Thursday 1st December, Dave Cohen from Australian Rugby League Development and his team delivered a Rugby League Clinic for year 4-6 students from Tintinara and Meningie Area School. The SAPSASA event was held at Meningie Area School Oval and all students were actively involved in all the mini-games and full-size games that the ARL Development Team had set up.

As Rugby League isn’t as popular in South Australia as netball, AFL, and tennis, most of the students had very little experience in the rules and gameplay at the start of the clinic. This meant that all students started with the same skill base and the day wasn’t dominated by students who had played Rugby League in the past. Students from both schools conducted themselves in a great manner, showing great courtesy and excellent levels of engagement.

The day was filled with some great moments for each student and many thanks must go to Dave Cohen and his team for conducting a highly professional, well-organised and incredibly fun day of clinics.

Do you enjoy looking after the natural resources in your area?

The South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board (NRM Board) is seeking expressions of interest from men and women to become members of the Mallee and Coorong Natural Resources Management Group to assist in working with the community to manage and protect our natural resources in South Australia.

The Group currently has members across the area at Mantung, Meningie, Karoonda, Coomandook and Parilla and meets about 9 times a year at different venues within our area. Terms are for 3 years beginning in February 2012 and sitting fees are paid for attending meetings as well as travel expenses. It’s very rewarding knowing what is happening in your local area and being able to understand and have a say about what is taking place with Natural Resource Management. If you would like to talk to a current member about the position, you can contact Clem Mason on 0427 617711 or Keith Scobie on 8575 1903. If you are interested or would like any further info call Helane Norman on 8578 1493.

If you have knowledge in one or more natural resource management areas such as primary production, soil conservation, local government, animal and plant control, salinity, indigenous culture, biodiversity or the management of water resources, we would welcome your application.

Prospective applicants are required to obtain the information package and application forms from the Board’s website: www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au or from Stephanie Weinert telephone 85801807 or email stephanie.weinert@samdbnrm.sa.gov.au Applications close at 5.00pm on Friday 30th December 2011.