Welcome to school year 2014. I find it hard to believe that 2013 is well and truly behind us and that we are at the end of January. Christmas seems like a distant memory. Having said that, I hope that all families had a wonderful Christmas and New Year and feel sufficiently renewed to move on into the new school year. A warm welcome to all new students and their families to the school and local district, particularly those children who are attending school for the first time.

As advised at the end of the 2013 school year, Mr Richard Oliver, Ms Carly Wilamowski and Mrs Judy Woolston have placement as contract staff at Meningie for the whole 2014 school year. Mrs Liz Keynes has been appointed for the first semester and is working with classes R-7 in areas of Health & PE at Years 5-7 and Science in the junior school. Mrs Beth Cowan will once again work with students through the intervention program MULTILIT, and Mrs Barb Mann will work with targeted students on Literacy and Numeracy through EALD. Ms Sarah Lehmann will be on site one day a week during Term 1. Her role is coordination of the sporting events throughout the term. Given that we have five major school sporting events, beginning with our own swimming carnival at Coonalpyn on Monday February 10th, she has already been busy organising the swimming lessons, lunch time practices and House Meetings.

**SWIMMING LESSONS**

Information regarding swimming lessons has gone home with students Reception – Year 8. The details include lesson schedules, as well as requirements. Please note that phone calls will not be made home for any forgotten gear. Please also note whilst we will endeavour to advise of changes to the program through the diary or communication book in a timely manner, this may not always be possible, especially where changes are made because of the weather.

**PARENT/TEACHER AQUAINTANCE NIGHT BBQ**

As advertised in the very last Newsletter of 2013, Parent/Staff Acquaintance Night is this next Thursday 6th February. As in previous years this is an informal evening giving families and the staff an opportunity to get together.

This event is fully catered, with water available for students. Parents might like to bring along their own drinks. Notes have already been sent home for catering purposes we ask that you return your RSVP or contact the Front Office with numbers attending by Monday 3rd February. We look forward to seeing families at our first event for the school year.

**HOT WEATHER/ DRINKS**

What an incredibly hot start to the school year. On days of extreme heat students generally
have a recess break outside, but remain inside during lunch.

We recommend that all students bring along a water bottle of cold water to be used during class time, hence reducing the amount of time going to and from the bubblers during learning time.

YEAR 12 RESULTS

Congratulations and best wishes to our 2013 Year 12 class. There were some outstanding personal results, from a group of students who were incredibly focused in pursuing their goals. Most students are taking up study options and/or moving in to employment.

NEW COORONG MALLEE PARTNERSHIP

As communicated to the school community throughout the latter part of 2013, DECD has restructured regions right throughout South Australia as part of the Brighter Future Direction. This means that as from the start of this school year there will be:

- 60 Partnerships across the state.
- 20 Educational Directors
- Meningie Area School is in the Coorong Mallee Partnership
- Mr Frank Mittiga is our Education Director and is based at Murray Bridge.

The Coorong Mallee Partnership brings leaders, staff, students, families and communities together to collaboratively improve child and student learning outcomes across the partnership.

The schools and preschools that go to make up our partnership range from Tintinara in the south, to Raukkan in the west, to Karoonda in the Mallee, and out to Pinnaroo on the border and all the schools and preschools in between.

As leaders and teachers we will be working a lot together. Leaders will be meeting several days a term, sharing Student Free Days, organising shared staff training and establishing teacher cluster learning groups to better understand educational priorities. Last Wednesday the first of the leaders meetings for the 2014 school year was held at Geranium. Much was achieved at this meeting, including meeting our Education Director Mr Frank Mittiga.

In the next Newsletter I will outline in some detail the priorities, not just for our site but those of the partnership. In short though, the following are priorities that I have spoken about before and are definitely areas for improvement across DECD:

- **Attendance & Participation** - The DECD 2014 target is 94%. Last year our overall attendance was 85%. This was a 1% improvement from 2013. We have a lot of work to do.
- **Numeracy & Literacy** - Great results in 2013. Real improvement in some areas. A focus on intervention.
- **Quality Teaching and Learning** - Teacher focus on both familiarisation and implementation of the Australian Curriculum and strategies to improve all student learning outcomes.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

As I went around the school visiting the classes yesterday it was fantastic to see so many students in school uniform. The wearing of school uniform is strongly supported by the Meningie Area School Governing Council for the following reasons:

- It creates a sense of identity and belonging.
- It enables students to be easily recognised in the school yard.
- It removes competition in wearing designer labels.
- It helps create a safe environment as visitors are easily identified.
- It teaches students understanding that in the work place, uniform is worn for reasons of safety.

In addition, we seek your support in ensuring your child/children is/are appropriately dressed for participation in H&PE, which is a compulsory subject.

For reasons of Work Health & Safety students need to be in lace up shoes. Whilst slip on canvas shoes remain quite fashionable, especially amongst middle/senior school students, they do not provide adequate grip or support for students to engage in the types of games played and the skills being taught. HPE teachers will send home a list of requirements for class and expectations about participation.
Further to this, students who are involved in Ag Science, Tech Studies, Home Ec and other practically based subjects need to have suitable footwear for the learning activities that they are involved in. The canvas slip on shoes do not provide adequate protection. If parents/caregivers have any problems with this please do not hesitate to contact me.

Monica Williams
Principal

SCHOOL CONSENT FORMS

Could parents please ensure that all forms have been completed and returned to the school as soon as conveniently possible.

The Swimming Consent forms are to be returned to the school whether your child intends to swim or not, as these are valuable in collecting information about student’s medical conditions, whether this information has changed or indeed whether your child requires any medications while at school.

TERM DATES 2014

Term 1 28th January – 5th April
Term 2 28th April – 4th July
Term 3 21st July – 26th September
Term 4 13th October – 12th December

LUNCHTIME SWIMMING

There will be supervised lunchtime swimming training from Monday 3rd February to Friday 7th February for students in Year 3 and older who can independently swim the length of the pool. Students not lap swimming will be asked to leave.

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KEY FOUND

A key was found near the bus bay after Presentation Night 2013. It has a black grip on it with a small neon yellow triangle. If this is yours it is available at the front office.

SCHOLASTIC ORDERS

Scholastic brochures e.g. Lucky Book Club, will be sent home with students early next week.

Orders, with payment, can be made at the book room until Friday 15th February 2013.

EMAILING OF NEWSLETTERS

Last year we introduced the emailing of newsletters and some other information to parents/carers. We had a great response to this and consequently email was used to impart information to about half of our families. If you would like to change this, have changed your email address or have not been but would like to be included, please provide Sharon at the front office with your details.
GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ASSISTS STUDENTS TO LEARN BETTER, MAKE FRIENDS, BE HAPPY & HAVE A BRIGHTER FUTURE. EVERY DAY REALLY DOES COUNT IN A STUDENT’S EDUCATION ☺

SA DENTAL SERVICE

It is important for children to have strong, healthy teeth and gums.

All children (0 – 17 years) are welcome to attend School Dental Service clinics.

Dental treatment is free at School Dental Service clinics if:
- Family Tax Benefit Part A is paid for your child, or
- Your child is covered by a School Card, Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card.

The School Dental Service will bulk-bill under the new Medicare Child Dental Benefits Schedule that starts in 2014. Under this scheme, most children aged between 2-17 years will be eligible to claim up to $1000 of Dental services over 2 years.

If your child already attends a SA Dental Service clinic, contact us when their next appointment is due. If your child does not already attend one of our clinics, please phone us to make an appointment in 2014.

For more information contact your local clinic. Clinic list found at www.sadental.sa.gov.au

Contact details for the Murray Bridge South Dental Clinic are:
Phone – 85323051
Address – Joyce Street, Murray Bridge
Open – 8.30am – 4.30pm Mon-Fri

CANBERRA TRIP

On Sunday the 1st December Alex McPherson, Tessa Bagshaw, Jemma Williams and I met the Coomandook and Tintinara groups at the airport prior to departing for Sydney. Once we arrived, our bus driver Rod met us at the airport and then took us on a small tour around Sydney.

We then checked into our accommodation, started to get to know everyone, had dinner and then went for a walk around Darling Harbour where we visited the Lindt Café and Starbucks.

The next day Rod guided the group on a more extensive tour where we visited Bondi Beach, Circular Quay, The Sydney Opera House, Sydney Bridge and more. After this we departed for the five hour journey to Canberra where we were to stay for the next three days. During our time in Canberra we visited The Australian War Memorial, Old Parliament House, New Parliament House while in session, NASA Deep Space Station, The National Film and Sound Archives, The Australian Institute of Sport, The Museum, The Zoo and The Royal Australian Mint, as well as get to know everyone while we hung out in the evenings.

My top three highlights would be The National Film and Sound Archives where they showed us in their theatre how film and sound have evolved over time, Old Parliament House where we re-enacted the debate about conscripting war soldiers and lastly getting to know everyone on the camp when we mingled in the evenings.

Overall the Camp was a very enjoyable experience which I would highly recommend to other students.

Abbey Hood (Year 11 student 2013) now attending school in Texas US: article to follow next newsletter

CANTEEN NEWS

An updated price list was distributed to parents both last week and this week. If you did not receive one, please contact the front office.

Lunch bags are available from the canteen, but can also be purchased from the supermarkets.
GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ASSISTS STUDENTS TO LEARN BETTER, MAKE FRIENDS, BE HAPPIER & HAVE A BRIGHTER FUTURE. EVERY DAY REALLY DOES COUNT IN A STUDENT’S EDUCATION 😊
GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ASSISTS STUDENTS TO LEARN BETTER, MAKE FRIENDS, BE HAPPIER & HAVE A BRIGHTER FUTURE. EVERY DAY REALLY DOES COUNT IN A STUDENT’S EDUCATION 😊