THE SCHOOL WILL OPEN FOR LESSONS AS NORMAL ON MONDAY 20TH FEBRUARY.

ALL STUDENTS NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERSCHOOL SWIMMING CARNIVAL ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND SCHOOL AS NORMAL.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK

Governing Council held its first meeting for the 2012 School Year on last Monday 13th February. In my report to the meeting I commented on the really positive start to the school year. Students are well settled in classes that have been well set up and organised by teachers and in walking around the school and visiting classes it is clear that learning and doing well is what we are about. The newly appointed Regional Director Alana Girven made comment of this as well as she toured the school on Tuesday morning this week. Despite it being a busy morning of school photos, Alana commented on organisation, politeness and the friendliness of the school environment. She was impressed to see students in Meningie Area school uniform. This has been a real push over the last few years, and I thank all parents and caregivers for support of the school in this matter.

Uniform

While on the subject of uniform, thankyou to parents and caregivers who have promptly responded to a letter sent out to families of students from Years 6 to 11 with regard to suitable footwear for playing sport and engagement in PE. Our correspondence to you in seeking your support has been driven by a duty of care in relation to safety. This week there was greater participation in classes. As stated in the letter as well as in the last newsletter, if you have a personal issue with regard to your own child and his/ her situation please contact me to resolve the matter.

The following topics were also part of my report to Governing Council:

**Strategic Directions 2012-2016**

This document describes the position and purpose of Public Education and the focus for the next four years. This document influences the Murray and Mallee Regional plan as well as our own Site Improvement Plan. Literacy is an important focus for all schools and is a regional priority. The Murray Mallee District has a commitment in Reading and Non Fiction Writing. Targets are set across the district to improve students’ skills and achievement. The work we do as a school focuses on up to date research and strategies to support students in their learning. This term learning how to write a persuasive text (argument) is one of the genres that is being taught right across the school. When students in Years 3, 5, 7 & 9 sit the NAPLAN Writing testing in May they will be required to show that they can use a range of writing skills to produce a good argument. At this time in the year, students are learning about the
structure of a persuasive test, language to use to convince the reader as well as developing a vocabulary appropriate to year level expectations.

**Reading**

Reading is critical to success in all subject areas. If students can not read what is asked of them, then they will find it difficult to do well at school. Teachers are always looking for new ways to support students with their reading and understanding. At Meningie Area School, there is a strong push to improve reading skills right across the school. Explicit reading skills are just one of the strategies being used in the classroom. Parents and caregivers can really support by making reading at home a valued and important activity. Right from an early age, children pick up what we value. Well before a child comes to school their opinions are forming around a whole range of things. When children see parents and adults in their life reading newspapers, magazines, books, they see it as normal that it is something they too will and can do. Of course it is not the whole story. Being at school daily, working with the teacher, building the skills year after year is necessary to become proficient. I know I write about it regularly, and talk about it almost every opportunity I get.

**Attendance**

Attendance day after day, week in week out is the most critical factor in being a successful student. When we look at our school testing data, it is the students who are here every day who show the most improvement, no matter what there testing scores are to start with. We call this “distance travelled” and this is the information that teachers get really excited about. So for 2012, give your child / children the best chance. Support them to be at school daily and of course on time, and see if it doesn’t make a difference, not just in their learning but in almost every other facet of school life. No doubt you can see I am passionate about this and we will be monitoring student attendance really closely this year. At the end of the day your child / children are the winners in this.

Among the other issues raised in my report at Governing Council were:

**Uniform**

A lot of time, collaboration and consultation has gone into the design and selection of an appropriate school short, through PaCSS. Finally, a design has arrived and many students have tried the shorts for size, fit and look. This is a unisex short, so we are looking forward to both parent and student support in this matter.

**Australian Curriculum**

As the year rolls out you will get to hear more about this. In particular, this year Maths, Science, English and History are being implemented across our site R -10. Of course because it is a new curriculum there will be times when we have teachers attending both essential and desirable Training and Development to effectively teach what is expected of them. There will be four staff development days this year instead of the usual two as announced by the state Minister for Education, Hon Grace Portolesi, some weeks ago to support this Federal initiative.

**Sporting Events**

Term 1 is traditionally a very busy term for sport and various sporting events and carnivals. The first of whole school events, our swimming carnival, was held Wednesday 15th February. There was an expectation that all students attend this event R -12. Discounting the number of students who were absent for illness, our data shows that 47 students were away from school, unexplained. This is approximately a quarter of the student population. I make this point because in the next few weeks we have further school sporting events, and seek your support in having your child/children participate. Governing Council is concerned about the level of participation and has noticed this trend over the past few years. At the end of the term we are going to review sport in the school and will be looking for feedback from the school community, inclusive of parents, students and staff. In particular we will be interested to know if we should continue to be holding swimming carnivals, athletics days and knock out sports if the participation by students is poor and not supported by parents. We will be looking for your opinions on this and other issues when we carry out the review.

We have had several Relief teachers in the school already this term. It has been commented that the students are settled and ready to learn. This is always great to hear, and I am pleased to pass this comment on to staff, students and parents.

Thankyou to all families who attended the parent / teacher acquaintance evening on Wednesday 8th February. It was great to see so many people out and about, and taking the time to catch up with teachers and other families. Comments from both staff and parents/caregivers has been positive and a great way to start the school year.

We are delighted that at long last the shade is over the Junior School playground and plans are underway to begin construction of the sandpit. With the much warmer weather this past week the shade has been a great addition to the playground.

**Monica Williams**
AUSTRALIAN ANIMALS

The Term Topic for the R/1/2 class is Australian Animals, particularly the animals of this district.

So far we have been looking at birds. We have studied the Crested Grebe, the Swamp Hen, the Spur Wing Plover and the Pelican.

This is in preparation for an exciting activity towards the end of this term.

Mrs Woolston

MAS SWIMMING CARNIVAL

On Wednesday 15th February Meningie Area School held their combined Swimming Carnival/Splash Day in near-perfect conditions. Again it was a fantastic start to the year with students travelling to Coonalpyn and participating in a variety of swimming races, novelty events and water activities. Student participation numbers were greater than last year’s carnival, with those who participated doing so in an appropriate manner. It was fantastic to see the support the students gave each other throughout the day. It was also pleasing to see the enthusiasm, encouragement and support that our senior students, particularly the House Captains, gave to our junior school students. Bonney was our eventual house winner on 321 points, just ahead of Albert on 254 with Coorong in third on 170. The following students were successful in their age group:

Sub-junior girls U10
Winner
Lucy Waser (Bonney)
Runner-up
Charlotte Treloar (Coorong)
Tiarnie Ling (Coorong)

Sub-junior boys U10
Winner
Ben Schaefer (Bonney)
Runner-up
Henry Turner (Albert)

Junior Girls U12
Winner
Aleisha Williams (Coorong)
Runner-up
Gena Mansfield (Bonney)

Junior Boys U12
Winner
Jai Ling (Coorong)
Runner-up
Kobie Hood (Bonney)

Intermediate Girls U14
Winner
Holly Vandenbrink (Albert)
Runner-up
Tessa Bagshaw (Albert)

Intermediate Boys U14
Winner
Lachlan Brown (Albert)
Runner-up
Harrison Tiver (Bonney)

Senior Girls Open
Winner
Marni Hood (Bonney)
Runner-up
Abbey Hood (Bonney)

Senior Boys Open
Winner
Jamie Thompson (Bonney)
Runner-up
Zac Vandenbrink (Albert)

Records broken:
Senior Boys 50m Butterfly – Zac Vandenbrink 30.83 (Old record 31.43)
Senior Boys 100m Freestyle – Zac Vandenbrink 1.00.11 (Old record 1.00.16)
Senior Boys 50m Freestyle – Zac Vandenbrink 27.96 (Old record 28.50)

Many thanks go out to parents for their great support timing and assisting the junior school staff with splash day. Your help ensured a successful day of sport. Thanks also to Hayley Roberts for conducting ongoing swimming lessons at school, Josh Wright for refereeing and Judy Appelkamp for driving the bus. Thanks to the staff for their help on the day and Katrina Hood for her enormous help in preparation prior to the day.

Congratulations to all students, parents and staff members for a successful day!

Jack Rowe (PE Teacher)

INTERSCHOOL SWIMMING CARNIVAL

Congratulations to the students who have been selected to be part of the Meningie Area School Interschool Swimming Team on Monday 20th February at the Coonalpyn Pool.

Notification, information and programs were sent home with students yesterday.

It is an expectation that all students not participating in the team attend school as a normal day on the Monday.

MENINGIE FOOTBALL CLUB

The club is calling for an expression of interest for players interested in playing for the Under 15s and Under 17.5s for 2012.

Training will commence on the 29th of February:
Under 15s start at 4:30pm
Under 17s start at 5:30pm

For more information, see Mr Walker at the library.
The River Murray Youth Council is for high school students who are interested in the environment and want to do something to make a difference, as well as being a chance to meet some great new people, explore new parts of the Murray-Darling Basin and have fun! Meetings are held every month at the Natural Resources Centre, Murray Bridge and transport can be arranged. If you can’t make regular meetings, sign up to stay in the loop and receive emails about special event days we will have on during the year. The information night was on Monday 13th February at MURRAY BRIDGE. This was a good opportunity to meet everyone and to hear about what exciting things are planned for 2012, including conferences, trips, planting days, school action plans and much, MUCH ,more!

For more information or to register your interest please contact Jodie Sommerville (RMYC Coordinator) on 85329100 or jodie.sommerville@samdbnrm.sa.gov.au or see Mr Mal Jurgs.

Jodie Sommerville
NRM Education Coordinator
(part time - Tuesdays and Thursdays)
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin
Natural Resources Management Board

Donations of preloved MAS school t shirts would be greatly appreciated. If you have anything to donate, please drop it in to the front office any time between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO), with the cooperation of schools, offers students aged 13 years or over the opportunity to apply for a tax file number (TFN) through school. This is a voluntary program and makes it easier for students to obtain a TFN.

Students need a TFN for employment, applying for Centrelink benefits, opening a bank account or deferring university fees.

Applying for a TFN through the school is easier because students do not need to show identifying documentation to the ATO. The application form is available from the school and students can complete it at home. The form requires information such as the student’s name, address and date of birth. Students also need to provide the following details:

- Students born in Australia will need to provide their:
  - birth certificate number, state of issue and year of registration, or
  - Australian passport number and date of issue.

- Students born overseas will need to provide their:
  - overseas passport number and country of issue, or
  - Australian citizenship certificate number and date of issue, or
  - Australian passport number and date of issue.

It is important that the application form is fully completed and signed by the student. All information provided on the form will remain confidential.

The school will certify the application form by cross-checking against the information held on their records. Students are not required to show identifying documentation to the school or the ATO.

Students will receive their TFN via a notification letter sent to their postal address, within 28 days of the application being received by the ATO.

If you have any questions, please phone 13 28 69 between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday and ask for the Community Education and Assistance area.

$10 Gift Voucher for all new Bank SA Accounts

For the start of Term 1, BankSA is offering all students who open a new Incentive Saver Account via the School a $10 Gift Voucher, which will be deposited into your child’s account once opened.

All children under 13 years who open an account with BankSA will also receive a Digger the Wombat Money Box, LittleSavers Calculator, LittleSavers Library Bag and a School Bank Wallet. LittleSavers is BankSA’s special saving club for kids and it’s all about having fun and learning how to save! Take a look at the LittleSavers website littlesavers.com.au

This offer is available until 30 March 2012 and is for new customers only. For more details or to collect a BankSA Application Pack, please call into the school office.
We welcome new Reception students to Meningie Area School: Nadia, Marshall, Aaron, Ta-Leigh, Summer and Jasmyn

NEW RECEPTION STUDENTS

MERIT AWARD FOR TIM ECKERT

On Tuesday 14th February, 2011 Year 12 student Tim Eckert was invited to Government House to receive his Merit Certificate for Stage 2 Design and Technology (Welding).

This recognises the fact that Tim achieved at the highest level possible for this subject and is just reward for the huge effort that he put into his project last year.

Tim designed and produced a bait layer, which you may have seen in the hall on Presentation Night.

Tim received his award from Miriam Silva, who is the Commercial Operations General Manager for Elders. Tim was accompanied by his parents, David and Gwenda and his welding teacher, Mr. Vic Woolston.

Tim was followed in the ceremony by former Meningie student, Molly Flanagan who received her merit in Workplace Practices. Congratulations on your achievement, Tim.

Entry forms are available from the front office
CALLING ALL PRE-SCHOOLERS

Baby Bounce

Is once again happening in 2012

at the Meningie Community Library.

Held every Thursday (during school term) from 10.30 am til 11.10 am

There is no cost;
you don’t even need to be a member.

All are welcome!

So come along to hear some fantastic stories, have some fun and enjoy the library!